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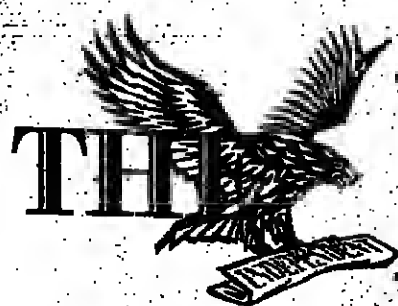
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THE INDEPENDENT

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SATURDAY 23 MARCH 1996 40p (1R 45p)

Should ours be the only children in the world to eat British beef?

CHARLES ARTHUR
Science Correspondent

The 13 scientists on the independent expert advisory committee on BSE and CJD met today at 11am to ponder one of the most urgent questions ever to face the nation: is it safe for our children to eat beef?

Nobody knows for certain if we are on the brink of an epidemic of CJD that could kill 500,000 people, or a containable problem that might claim a few score lives a year.

The one devastating fact we do know about mad cow disease is that the top scientists in the field have reversed their position about its link with human illness.

With British beef now banned world-wide, and the Consumers' Association advising against eating it, we wait for the committee to advise ministers on two crucial issues. Should parents ban their children from eating beef? And why might it be safe for adults to eat it but not children?

Yesterday, Professor John Pattison, chairman of the committee, caused further confusion by saying he would not feed beef to his three-month-old grandson who had never eaten meat, but he would continue to give

it to his nine-month-old granddaughter.

There are six further key questions about BSE and its risks that have not been answered—and never posed in public by ministers or their advisers. If they are not on Professor Pattison's agenda this morning, they should be.

1) Is a single bite of a BSE-infected meal enough to pass on the disease, or does it require repeated exposure over a longer period?

2) Are calf and beef liver and kidney—which are not removed from carcasses—absolutely safe to eat?

3) Why should beef be dangerous now, given the safety measures that have been taken in the past six years? But if it is safe, why does the Government keep tightening its measures?

4) As experiments have shown that BSE can be passed to pigs, are vets and farmers being told to monitor pigs on farms for any signs of the disease?

5) Can the disease be passed to chickens? If not, why did SEAC this week ban the use of albumin from meat for feed for all farm animals?

6) When will we know if the danger of an epidemic is over?

BSE shockwaves reverberate around the world

The Consumers' Association yesterday told British shoppers to avoid eating beef products.

The British beef trade, worth £4bn a year with an export trade of £520m, suffered a huge blow when South Africa, Singapore and most of the European Union countries announced plans to ban British beef.

France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Portugal, Finland, Greece, Cyprus, Holland and Sweden were already refusing to buy British beef yesterday, leading to City speculation that the collapse in the beef trade could lead to dire consequences for the British economy.

Shops and supermarkets were also quick to respond to the crisis about the apparent link between BSE and CJD. Somerfield supermarkets, a 625-store chain, said it

was refunding any customers who returned beef products. The Co-Op, for the first time in its 150-year history, said that it was considering using beef from abroad.

Insurance companies, such as Pegasus Assurance and Skandia Life, said that they intended to include cover for CJD.

Schools around Britain continued to strike beef off dinner menus. Lancashire County Council took beef from all secondary school menus. The council had banned it from primary schools three months ago.

In Broadmoor prison, beef was also taken off the menu.

The only person not overly alarmed by the British BSE crisis yesterday was Ireland's Prime Minister, John Bruton, who predicted a massive increase in the sales of Irish beef.

Reports, pages 2,3; Leading article and letters, page 18

There are questions, too, about the actions—or lack of them—that the Government took in the 1980s.

When BSE was first identified in 1986, a committee led by Professor Sir Richard Southwood was set up to consider the risks posed by the disease and what measures should be taken to stop it.

Professor Southwood told the Independent yesterday, "In

defence of our committee, we met on 20 June 1988 and I wrote the next day that certain steps should be carried out right away. But we did say that it would be a decade or so before we saw anything that would tell us whether the disease had passed to humans. We were wrong in thinking it wouldn't get across the species boundary. But what should we have done? Ordered the culling of all the cattle in Britain? The fact is that the regulations that were brought in to stop cattle remains being fed back to cattle would have been effective. But some farmers, as we now know, held on to their old, contaminated feeds for at least a year. It's not just us. Society as a whole has to take responsibility for this. But of course, hindsight is a wonderful thing."

Yet the Government could

have taken urgent action at that time which could have eased the problems we are now experiencing. Experts in the field point to two key questions:

1) Why did the Government not begin a crash programme to develop a test which would diagnose BSE in live cattle before they showed symptoms of the disease?

2) Why was an experiment not begun immediately to see whether BSE could be passed orally to primates such as chimpanzees—an experiment which would have told us the level of risk we would now be facing?

Dr Anne Maddocks, a member of the independent pressure group the Spongiform Encephalopathy Research Committee, says that the second question is now moot: "There's no point doing the primate experiment now," she said yesterday. "It's us. We are the experiment."

The meeting of the 13 scientists at the Civil Service College, in Sunningdale, Berkshire, is expected to go on today and tomorrow.

Members who have spoken to the Independent are almost fearful of the responsibility before them. "I almost just want to crawl into a hole," one said this week. "I look at the paper

and think, My God, we've killed off a £500m export industry. You can't imagine what it's like. But we have to make these decisions, and we will." Another said "The Government is in very deep water over this and they are only too glad to pass the responsibility for making decisions over to us. And then they simultaneously want the answer, and only the right answer."

It is understandable that the Government does not want to scaremonger.

But equally it owes us an explanation after protecting the interests of the meat industry for so long. First, it must lay bare everything it knows—particularly evaluations of all the risks posed by eating beef and its products. Not just those we face now but those it kept to itself in the past.

Secondly, it must divest itself of its overly cosy relationship with the meat industry. Anyone who thinks that this relationship is valuable and should be retained should ask the question: who changed the regulations in slaughterhouses which meant that the remains of BSE-infected cattle could be fed back to cows, thus prolonging the agony we all now face?

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After Dunblane: Children take first step back to normality as Howard backs crackdown on sex offenders

Tears as pupils return to school

Some ran and skipped through the main gates, some greeted friends, but there were others who kept close to their anxious parents. It was no ordinary day for the children of Dunblane as they returned yesterday to their primary school for the first time since the massacre nine days ago which left 16 children, their teacher and their killer dead.

Many parents paused at the school gates to hug their children and speak some private words of encouragement. As they left, some of the adults had tears in their eyes when they emerged from the school after taking in their children.

Educational psychologists and counsellors were on hand to support the 700 children on their first taster steps to normality. School began as usual at 9am but it was for half a day only, with no assembly, no play-time breaks, and ending at noon. The gym where the massacre happened was sealed and its windows boarded up.

As the children began to gather inside the building one of their injured classmates, Matthew Birnie, aged 5, was allowed home from hospital. And the Archbishop of Canterbury Dr George Carey speaking in London warned there were limits to forgiveness as he accused the Dunblane killer, Thomas Hamilton, of committing a "heinous" crime. Dr Carey spoke of the Bible's "severe judgement" on child-killers.

At the school gates, Ron Taylor, the headteacher, reflected on the first day back: "As you can imagine, this has been a long dark week full of tears... However, the evil that came last week has gone."

"We have really one priority now—to ensure our school becomes a happy place of learning once again."



Take care: A mother kisses her daughter at the gate of Dunblane primary school as pupils return to their classes for the first time since last week's tragedy. Photograph: Reuter

Police plan register of paedophiles

JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

Convicted paedophiles are to be listed on a national register and will be forced to inform the police when they move home, under proposals being considered by the Government.

The proposed measures, announced yesterday by Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, are expected to include a ban on paedophiles working with youngsters as part of a clampdown on sex offenders.

They will be outlined in a forthcoming consultation paper and could be included in a Crime Bill in the autumn. Mr Howard is known to be in favour of tougher restrictions on sex offenders.

The police have been urging the Government to set up a new system to monitor abusers more closely after a series of cases involving convicted paedophiles who had changed address and secretly started molesting youngsters. They have also been given council houses next to schools and found employment working with children. The police argue that if they were kept informed of the whereabouts of sex offenders they could prevent many offences.

A national register would probably be controlled by the police and held on a central computer, but local authorities would be allowed supervised access. At present the National Criminal Intelligence Service holds a list of about 4,500 convicted or suspected paedophiles in Britain. In 1994 there were 274 people convicted or cautioned for gross indecency with a child, although this does not include child rape. In the same year 109 people were found guilty of unlawful sex with a girl

aged under 13.

The proposals are expected to include the introduction of two new sentences which would force convicted child molesters to tell the police if they changed address—a "residency order"—and would stop them working with children—a "child protection order". If offenders broke the orders they could be jailed.

Mr Howard, addressing the National Probation Conference in Coventry, yesterday said: "The Government believe there is a strong case for strengthening the arrangements for supervising convicted sex offenders following their release from custody. Protecting the public is the aim which underpins the Government's entire criminal justice policy."

The police argue that the changes could help to prevent murders of children such as Rosie Palmer, aged three, in Hartlepool, Cleveland, who was killed in July 1994 by a man living a few doors away, who had been involved in previous incidents of child molestation which were not reported. Detectives believe this information would have helped the police identify the man more quickly as a suspect.

Chief Superintendent Brian MacKenzie, President of the Police Superintendents' Association, added: "These changes may infringe some civil liberties, but we believe the rights of children should come before convicted paedophiles."

Mary Honeyball, general secretary of the Association of Chief Officers of Probation, added: "A register could give some added protection given that sex offenders are extremely prolific in their offending and the impact on their victims is the most abhorrent."

WEATHER

There will be sunshine in most areas after a damp and drizzly morning. Page 2



"How could anyone leave poor Gypsy to suffer like this?"



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The BSE risk: Families are advised to change their eating habits as countries across the world reject British produce

Watchdog says: Don't eat beef products

JAMES CUSICK

The public were yesterday urged to stop eating beef by the highly-respected watchdog organisation the Consumer Association. The group, amid yesterday's global warnings against British beef, said it had "no choice" but to issue the warning to avoid any risk to the public from catching the human form of mad cow disease.

As sales of poultry, pork and fish soared, the association said: "There is a currently an unquantifiable risk in eating beef."

It urged that the Government should make more information available to the public "as a matter of extreme urgency".

Following the warning, the Meat and Livestock Commission, the beef's industry representative group, admitted for the first time that cows infected with BSE could have entered the food chain. In its first published assessment of the risk to humans, the MLC said the risk of exposure to infected food was "one in 1.2m". But it said on that basis that between 1986 and 1989 fewer than 50 people might have been exposed to infected food.

Although the impact of the World Health Organisation's plans for an unprecedented emergency meeting will have serious impact on Britain's global trade, the announcement at home by the Co-op that it is considering buying beef from abroad for the first time in its 150-year history created further panic among retailers.

The Co-op, which has 3,000 stores, said it will be looking for alternatives. "There is an opportunity to import beef from abroad from Australia, New Zealand and South America," said the company. The firm said the Government had failed to

IN THE STORES

give firm guidelines with respect to the consumption of beef. Tesco said that its beef was sourced from 18 different suppliers, 11 from the UK and the remainder from the Irish Republic. Country of origin was clearly marked on all its products.

No decision had yet been taken to buy beef from elsewhere. Sainsbury's said that all of the beef in its stores came from the UK and the Irish Republic but "all of our buying policies are under review". The Irish Prime Minister John Bruton said people were moving over to Irish beef following the new BSE health scare in Britain.

Throughout yesterday cattle sales again plummeted at markets throughout the country. Auctioneers at Ruthin, North Wales, described prices as "disastrous", with only 34 beasts offered for sale compared with about 200 on an average day.

At Derby and Ross-on-Wye, prices fell by up to £140 per animal. Carlisle, the biggest market in the country, saw prices £90 down on last year. A Lincolnshire slaughterhouse is to be the first in Britain to be prosecuted under anti-BSE regulations designed to prevent infected bovine offal getting into the food chain.

The prosecution follows the alleged discovery of unmarked bovine offal at a processing plant producing animal feed.

A horse slaughterer, Neil Richard Pawsen, trading as H Pawsen and Son at Station Road, Donington on Bain, Lincolnshire, is to stand trial at Louth magistrates' court on 13 May. He faces charges related to the non-staining of specified bovine offal removed from cattle carcasses.



Carcasses at the Anglo-Dutch Meat Processors, Eastbourne, which deals mainly in beef. Photograph: Philip Meech

From Austria to New Zealand the world bans British meat

KATHERINE BUTLER
Brussels

The world turned its back on British beef yesterday as countries from Austria to New Zealand announced a ban on importing beef from Britain. South Africa, Singapore and New Zealand suspended imports, following the lead of most of the EU countries.

The prospect of a Brussels-imposed ban looked more likely last night after the European Commission endorsed the decision of 10 EU member-states to close their borders to meat and live-cattle exports from Britain. Germany, Italy and Austria joined France, Belgium, Portugal, Finland, Greece, Sweden and the Netherlands in unilateral bans. Brushing aside claims that it was

EXPORTS

illegal to ban trade with Britain, the Commission said governments could invoke the EU treaty to keep out disease. "Member-states have the legal right to take safeguard action either on human animal or even plant health grounds if they feel there is a threat," said a spokesman. Suspension of trade is, however, temporary pending a decision on what joint EU measures should follow.

Banning British beef was further evidence of "completely understandable" in light of Britain's admission that 10 victims of CJD may have contracted the fatal brain condition through eating beef.

"This goes beyond a question of what you can or can't do in legal terms. Clearly we are confronted with a serious public health problem, the spokesman added. The Commission will only de-

cide what action must be taken to allay public concerns after it receives the advice of veterinary officers representing the 15 member-states scheduled to meet in Brussels on Monday. But independent scientific advisers to the Commission who gathered yesterday to review the latest evidence were expected to endorse the British findings pointing to a probable link between beef and CJD.

It was not clear last night to what extent an EU ban on British beef exports would affect meat on sale in British supermarkets or butcher shops. Butchering slaughterhouse regulations or other EU curbs already in place to minimise the BSE risk clearly apply in Britain as well as elsewhere. It is unlikely, however, that the Commission could either legally or politically direct Britain to withdraw beef from British shops on public-health or consumer-protection grounds.

Commission officials were also reluctant to be drawn on whether Brussels would order Britain to destroy its entire herd. The Commission, which manages agricultural policy for the 15 states, has in the past operated an EU-funded slaughter policy to contain outbreaks of classical swine fever in Germany and Belgium.

But there are neither funds available to finance the destruction of 11 million cattle in Britain nor a clear opinion that it would be the best option. One source suggested the Commission would want much more than circumstantial evidence of a link between BSE and CJD before ordering a slaughter-out policy.

With the EU facing an unprecedented crisis on the overall beef market, the focus was turning yesterday to how to deal with a glut of unwanted meat and the prospect of prices in free-fall.

Top scientists who advise the government

CHARLES ARTHUR
Science Correspondent

The members of the Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee (SEAC) start meeting today to decide on advice to parents on whether children should eat beef.

It comprises Professor John Pattison, chairman: professor of medical microbiology and Dean of University College, London Medical School. Appointed to the committee last February, and to the chairmanship late last year on the retirement of David Tyrrell, head of the now-defunct Common Cold Unit. With 30 years' experience in the field of clinical pathology, Pattison is widely respected in his field.

Dr Rob Will, vice-chairman: consultant neurologist and head of the National CJD Surveillance Unit in Edinburgh. His team first noticed the unusual cases of the disease, which led to last week's bombshell announcement.

Professor John Collinge, head of the Prion Diseases Group at St Mary's College Hospital, London. A clinical neurologist whose research group is active in research into BSE and other similar diseases, mainly using transgenic mice. Paper published in the scientific journal *Nature* in late December 1995 suggested that BSE could not cause CJD, based on preliminary results with genetically-engineered mice with human genes. The experiments are continuing.

Professor Ingrid Allen, professor of Neuropathology, Queen's University of Belfast. Dr Mike Palmer, a consultant in Communicable Disease Control, City of Manchester. Joined SEAC in December 1995. Professor Peter Smith, an epidemiologist from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Joined SEAC in January 1996.

Has wide experience in diseases of the central nervous system, particularly multiple sclerosis. Professor Fred Brown, formerly deputy director of the now-defunct National Virus Research Institute, and now visiting scientist at the US Department of Agriculture's Plum Island Animal Disease Centre in New York. Dr William Buxton, veterinary epidemiologist, US Department of Agriculture. Dr Richard Kimberlin, independent consultant on vaccine-related diseases. Has spent the past eight years on risk assessment of the dangers posed by BSE to humans.

David Pepper, private veterinary surgeon.

Dr William Watson, former director of the Central Veterinary Laboratory.

Professor Jeffrey Almond, a virologist and professor of microbiology at the University of Reading. His own laboratory has been engaged in BSE research for the past five years. Joined SEAC December 1995. Ray Bradley, a veterinary pathologist and chairman of the BSE sub-group of the EC's scientific veterinary committee. Regarded as a world expert on the disease. Joined SEAC in December 1995.

Dr Mike Palmer, a consultant in Communicable Disease Control, City of Manchester. Joined SEAC in December 1995. Professor Peter Smith, an epidemiologist from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Joined SEAC in January 1996.

Babies stay on beef

Professor John Pattison, head of SEAC, the independent advisory committee on mad cow disease, said yesterday that he would not give beef to his three-month-old grandson who had never eaten meat, but his nine-month-old granddaughter would continue eating beef.

Speaking on Radio 4's *Farming Today* programme, Professor Pattison said he had a grandson, aged 3 months, who has yet to eat beef.

"My daughter and son-in-law are simply going to wait another six or 12 months to see what happens before introducing him to beef," he said.

As for his granddaughter, "Our son and daughter-in-law have actually given our granddaughter some beef. They actually prepare the babies' meals from the same material that they use for their own meals." The professor was criticised by Labour for spreading further confusion.

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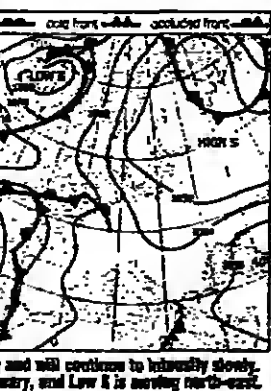
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Weather forecast

NOON FORECAST



TODAY'S FORECAST: Central and southern Scotland will be cloudy but with light winds and the chance of a shower. Southern Scotland and the Ireland will be cloudy with rain, but just a light shower in the north. Northern England and North Wales will get some fairly heavy rain, but also light showers. In the south, there will be some rain and drizzle with patchy fog. However, many places will brighten while the breeze will stay in the south. OUTLOOK FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS: Sunday will see some dry bright weather over Scotland and the Ireland. England and Wales will be cloudy with some rain moving slowly south. Rain is more likely in the south and west, but there will be some sun in the north. The weather will stay cool but not very cold with light rain. There will be some rain in the south and west, but with light showers in the east.

WORLD WEATHER

London	12/15	10/15	10/15	London	12/15	10/15	10/15
Edinburgh	10/12	10/12	10/12	Edinburgh	10/12	10/12	10/12
Birmingham	11/14	11/14	11/14	Birmingham	11/14	11/14	11/14
Manchester	11/14	11/14	11/14	Manchester	11/14	11/14	11/14
Cardiff	11/14	11/14	11/14	Cardiff	11/14	11/14	11/14
Belfast	11/14	11/14	11/14	Belfast	11/14	11/14	11/14
Paris	12/15	12/15	12/15	Paris	12/15	12/15	12/15
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The BSE risk: Businesses to pay the price as consumers change eating habits

Economy feels the strain



Cash cow: The crisis in the beef industry could severely limit the Government's ability to deliver tax cuts

Photograph: Brian Harris

DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

The beef crisis could be bad for our wallets as well as our health, if the worst fears about the need to slaughter cattle are borne out. It has already hit the pound, which fell by half a penny against the German mark yesterday.

City of London experts warned yesterday that in the most extreme scenario, government borrowing would be billions of pounds higher, tens of thousands of meat industry workers could be unemployed, inflation would rise and growth would decline.

The damage to public sector finances could easily dash hopes

of tax cuts in the next Budget and beyond.

Jan Shepherdson at City firm HSBC Markets said the sharp fall in beef prices would initially reduce retail prices, but in the longer run a reduced UK supply of beef and dairy products would raise imports and increase inflation. At the outside, if the entire herd were slaughtered, inflation could be 1.5 per cent higher than its current 2.9 per cent.

The loss of British supplies would also damage the balance of trade. Beef exports amount to just over £500m a year, but Britons spend £3.5bn on home produced beef, some

of which will switch to imported meat. If dairy exports were also affected, the trade deficit might be as much as £7bn a year worse.

Although consumers will switch to alternatives such as pork and poultry, Mr Shepherdson argued that the crisis could reduce GDP by more than 1 per cent in a full year.

Other economists thought the effects on the economy would not be this big, as the loss of the entire herd seems unlikely. However, there could be a severe impact in meat-producing regions such as East Anglia and Scotland.

Many predicted the crisis would have dire consequences for the Government's finances.

The immediate cost would be compensation for farmers, with preliminary estimates of the total cost of slaughtering all 11m cattle put at £7bn to £20bn. The EU will pick up some of the eventual bill for farm compensation, but the amount would have to be negotiated by the Government.

Additional compensation claims from the rest of the meat and meat processing industry could also be expected.

A Treasury spokesman said any estimates of the cost would be hypothetical, as the extent of compensation if meat products had to be withdrawn from the shelves would be a matter for debate.

The costs of additional

healthcare for the unknown future number of victims of CJD enter the equation too, although insurers said yesterday that private medical insurance policies covered the disease.

A further burden on the public purse will be unemployment benefit for those who lose their jobs in the beef industry. It currently employs about 40,000 people, including 5,500 in slaughterhouses.

Simon Briscoe, an expert on government finances at City bank Nikko Europe said: "There is a small risk the Government will face an enormous cost of billions of pounds and a very good chance that the cost will run into hundreds of millions."

Next week in THE INDEPENDENT

From Monday, Section Two will have a completely new look, with more pages, new features, a daily radio column and an expanded listings section providing Britain's most comprehensive daily guide to going out.

on Monday

A new section focusing on Family Life, beginning with an investigation into how children's television is threatening the family unit. In the centre pages, each week we challenge the personalities and institutions that have become icons of Nineties life. On Monday, we ask: Do we need Start the Week? Plus: In the second part of our series on the making of the modern girl, we examine teenage attitudes to sex, relationships and marriage.

on Tuesday

A 24-page section with all the action from a big weekend of sport. Plus: Part one of a major investigation into the crisis afflicting English cricket. Where does our summer game go from here? And the Monday interview with Alan Shearer, the striker who doesn't mind not scoring goals for England.

on Wednesday

Part three of the making of the modern girl: how the Nineties generation gets what it wants. Plus: Health - a new treatment for chronic fatigue. Also on Tuesday, fashion, architecture, visual arts and media. Our new back pages section introduces a weekly feature on the history of popular culture.

on Thursday

Theatre, midweek travel section, your money, finance and law. Plus - Final part of the making of the modern girl: what the future holds for the teenager of the Nineties. In our back pages, Martin Newell, Britain's leading rock poet, and Neil Kerber, one of the country's funniest cartoonists, present their views of the modern world.

on Friday

All our regular features, including Dilemmas, John Walsh's column, plus film, education and graduate plus. In the back pages, William Hartston's history of the world in 10 1/2 inches

on Saturday

24Seven - a brand new 20-page pull-out-and-keep entertainment and listings section. Including a complete day-by-day planner for the week ahead, plus seven-day TV, radio and satellite listings, ticket offers and informed comment on the week's highlights

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Whistleblowers say they are vindicated

CHARLES ARTHUR
Science Correspondent

Three scientists have been claiming for years that the threat posed to humans by mad cow disease, or BSE, is far greater than the Government has admitted. Stephen Dealler, Richard Lacey and Harash Narang are independent of each other, but their work has had a common theme: an epidemic of CJD is on the way because of BSE.

Dr Dealler, a senior registrar at Burnley General Hospital, has made a detailed study of the epidemiological risks to humans, assuming varying levels of infectivity from BSE-infected beef. In a wide-ranging study, he has also visited meat markets, auctions and abattoirs to find out at first hand whether farmers and slaughterhouse workers were really following the Government's guidelines. He often found that they were not.

Richard Lacey, a microbiologist at the University of Leeds, has claimed since 1989 that BSE would pass on to humans, and that an epidemic was on the way. However, he was repeatedly dismissed as a scaremonger, even though he had been proven correct in previous years when he warned of the risks posed by salmonella. He is predicting that hundreds of thousands of people could develop CJD as a result of consuming BSE-infected foods.

But colleagues say that Professor Lacey was too ready to talk to the media when his research was incomplete. Scientists generally prefer to carry out their arguments through the pages of scientific journals rather than through newspapers and TV channels.

Dr Narang is also a microbiologist, but has alienated many other scientists by putting forward a theory for BSE - that it

is caused by a "slow virus" which takes decades to act - that conflicts with a number of peer-reviewed experiments. Based in Newcastle, he is now funded by a private businessman, having been fired from the Government's Public Health Laboratory Service in the 1980s.

He claims to have developed a urine test for both BSE and CJD which can diagnose the disease while the victim is still alive. He claims though that he has been the victim of a witch-hunt in which his car's tyres have been slashed and his house broken into.

However, other scientists point to what they see as inconsistencies in Dr Narang's work. One is that BSE has been linked to any case of CJD until 10 unusual deaths in humans, apparently from a new strain of the disease, which occurred in the past two years. This, they say, shows that Dr Narang's evidence for a link in 1990 cannot be valid.

Avenues open for families to sue

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES
Legal Affairs Editor

While the beef crisis has yet to spawn a stampede of victims rushing for their writs, there are potential avenues for claiming compensation for suffering and financial damage.

A Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease victim - even one who had consumed burgers in Elvis Presley-type proportions - would make little headway trying to sue the retailers of the foods. That is because of the difficulty in proving which of a multitude of butchers, burger bars and other foodstuffs passed on the fatal ingredient, perhaps five or six years ago.

A complaint against the suppliers of foodstuffs for cows might be a different matter. Farmers might also have possible claims.

During the Sixties, Seventies and Eighties, the largely self-regulated industry, the so-called "redcoats", used sheep scurry to improve protein content of the foodstuffs.

According to Martyn Day, a personal injury lawyer specialising in "class" actions for multiple clients, a big question is whether the protein, often from old carcasses, was heated sufficiently to kill the disease.

A fresh wave of political difficulty for Tory ministers - or their successors - would come if and when people contemplated suing the Government for negligence. Much would depend on whether the small number of CJD cases hides an epidemic. A large number of claimants could give rise to a high-profile class action - and considerable sympathy from the public.

The more CJD cases that emerge, the greater will be the political pressure to pay compensation without putting claimants to proving their cases in court.

If that day ever came, Mr Day puts the size of individual claims in six figures. That would cover the horrendous suffering, loss of amenity and financial losses.

Crisis sets Tories against friends in meat industry

CHRIS BLACKHURST
Westminster Correspondent

The Government runs the risk of alienating some of its staunchest supporters over the banding of the beef crisis.

Ties between the Tory party and meat industry go much deeper than the traditional one of the gentleman farmer turned backbench shire loyalist.

The family still most closely identified with beef, the Vestys, has been a generous giver to the party. While it did not make a donation last year, Lord Vestey's company, Western United Investments, has given £621,000 in the recent past - making it one of the Tories' largest benefactors.

Hillsdown Holdings, one of UK's biggest meat processors and operator of 12 abattoirs, has an entrée to the highest levels. In 1992, John Gummer, then agriculture minister, was rebuffed by a committee of MPs

for having a £2,000 pond in the garden of his Suffolk home paid for by Hillsdown.

Barry Legg, the Conservative MP for Milton Keynes-South West, was its company secretary before going to Parliament; Sir John Nott, the former Cabinet minister, is its executive chairman and Paul Judge, until recently the Conservatives' director-general, sold them his food company, Premier Brands. Mr Judge was also head of Food From Britain, the government-backed bureau to promote British food overseas, prior to going to Smith Square to try and sort out the Tories' finances. He is now a ministerial special adviser.

Another large meat company, Samworth, based in Leicestershire, which makes pies and pasties, supports its local Conservative association and regularly gives £8,000 to the City and

Industrial Liaison Council, widely thought to be a Conservative-supporting organisation.

David Samworth, the company's chairman, is also a former chairman of the Meat and Livestock Commission, the industry lobbying group.

The MP hardest hit by the scare is likely to be Christopher Gill. Not only is he a farmer but his family firm FA Gill is a meat packer and processor.

Until recently, Simon Burns, the Tory MP for Chelmsford, listed McDonalds, the burger chain, as one of those companies to which he gave parliamentary advice. The company has been dropped from his entry in the 1995 MPs' register.

In all, 28 Conservatives list farming among their outside interests. At the most senior level, they include William Waldegrave, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, who owns shares in the family farming company, Waldegrave Farms.

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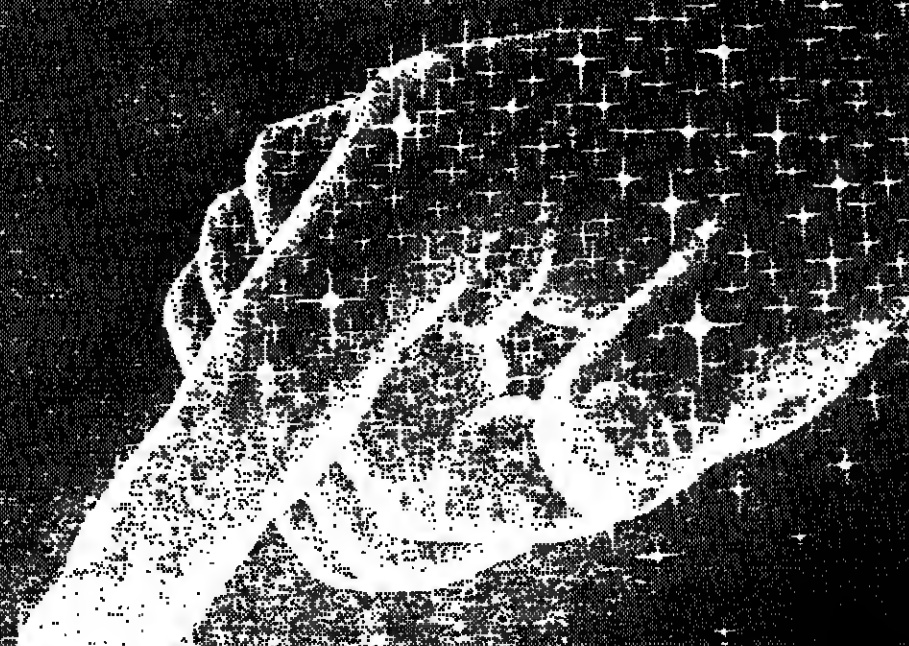
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INLA

Paedophile's
term 'to protect
the unborn

THE CREDIT

No and
Ever.

08

INLA declares units ready for war

DAVID MCKITTRICK
Ireland correspondent

The small but ferocious Irish National Liberation Army yesterday served notice that it considers itself back at war, with all its units "placed on standby."

The threat is being taken seriously by the authorities, since the organisation has on many occasions demonstrated an ability to make violent come-backs

after periods of inactivity. Although much smaller than the IRA and almost certainly incapable of waging a sustained campaign at a high level, its capacity for launching occasional lethal attacks is not in question. It has in the past been responsible for a small number of incidents in Britain. Among the most notorious were the murder of a special constable in North Yorkshire in the early 1990s.

An INLA statement said: "We cannot look on idly as the British cynically draw out and fudge attempts at a negotiated settlement while the full oppressive apparatus of the state is employed against the nationalist working class. Neither can we allow our reluctance to be sucked into a cycle of violence to be misconstrued as a sign of weakness."

The statement said that as from midday yesterday, its units

had been placed on standby and would operate "from a position of defence and retaliation." The emphasis on defence is explained by the fact that the organisation is wracked by internal conflicts which have caused several recent deaths.

This means that a fair amount of its energies are likely to be occupied in feuding rather than attacks on the security forces or loyalist elements. Three people have died recently, the first of

whom was Gino Gallagher, one of the organisation's most notorious gunmen.

This led first to the retaliatory murder of a Belfast man in a County Donegal caravan site, and then the accidental killing of a nine-year-old girl, Siobhán, who was shot dead in north Belfast by men who were apparently trying to kill a relative.

The INLA was almost completely quiet during the 17-month IRA ceasefire, although

many members did not agree with the peace process. The IRA is assumed to have warned the smaller organisation to halt its violence.

But the ending of the IRA ceasefire and the tensions generated by the present feud, seem to have brought about yesterday's announcement. The section of the INLA which made the statement appears to be the larger part of the organisation. The strength of the

other dissident faction is not known.

The Sinn Féin annual conference, which takes place in Dublin this weekend, will have as its centrepiece a keynote speech by the party president, Gerry Adams. The BBC in Belfast yesterday quoted an IRA source describing John Major's election proposal as a "unacceptable" saying the scheme provided no dynamic for a resolution of the conflict.

IN BRIEF

Footballers for trial

Soccer stars Bruce Grobbelaar, 36, John Fashanu, 32, and Hans Segers, 34, were yesterday committed for trial by a magistrate at Eastleigh, Hampshire, to face match-fixing allegations along with Malaysian businessman Heng Lim, 30. The four are accused of conspiring to give and accept gifts of money to influence the outcome of football matches or as rewards for having so done.

Action on dogs

Moves for tougher powers to crack down on dog fouling, imposing fines of up to £1,000, has cleared the Commons. The Dogs (Fouling of Land) Bill gained an unopposed third reading and goes to the Lords with Government backing.

Labour poll boost

Labour is heading for a record win in the Staffordshire South East by-election on 11 April, according to an opinion poll dismissed by Conservatives. The Birmingham Evening Mail poll gives Labour, on 66 per cent, a 50-point lead over the Tories. The Liberal Democrats were on 13 per cent.

Cathedral siege

Police surrounded the catholic cathedral in Northampton last night after a man, believed to be armed, took shelter there. A negotiating team was in place.

Toothpaste bid blow

A bid to launch a mass legal action on behalf of children whose teeth were allegedly damaged by fluoride in toothpaste suffered a setback yesterday when a High Court judge refused campaigners legal aid.

Paedophile's jail term 'to protect the unborn'

A judge jailed a sex molester for 27 years after telling him he wanted to protect Britain's children, including those not yet born. The sentence is one of the longest imposed for offences which do not carry a life term.

A charity worker, Raymond Hodgson, 43, carried out a catalogue of sex abuse on nine young girls. Police caught him after he had abused four children but he escaped by locking officers in his house.

He went on to sexually abuse another five children, after winning the trust of their parents as he travelled around Britain. He was caught when his photograph was shown on the BBC television programme *Crimewatch* and the station was inundated with calls.

Winchester Crown Court was shown a pornographic video Hodgson made in which he forced a six-year-old girl to perform sexual acts. Judge Martin Tucker QC told him: "Having seen in the video of the sort of things you were doing, it must be realised what a revolting series of offences these were."

"When you are eventually at liberty the overwhelming probability is you will try to do it again. I have got to protect children and unborn children."

"I am passing a sentence that will keep you inside until your sexual life is on the wane."

The court heard Hodgson re-offended when he was released from prison after a conviction for raping a 12-year-old girl.

The girls he targeted on his release were aged 6 to 13.

The court heard Hodgson began working for a charity and befriended one of his employees who had young children. Once he won the family's trust he began abusing the girl. After befriending this girl he met other youngsters by "wheeling himself into the affections and trust of their parents."

One girl told police Hodgson pulled her into his bed, stripped and removed her pants.

While visiting friends in Gosport, Hampshire, Hodgson abused an eight-year-old girl after giving her candy. The girl woke in the middle of the night to find Hodgson touching her. She began crying and later told her sister. Police were alerted.

But when police went to arrest Hodgson he conned them into letting him say goodbye to his landlady, locking them in the house while he escaped. He then moved north to Morecombe under an assumed name where he again used his work with a charity to abuse another set of children.

Hodgson said he did not know why he had abused the children. "Ninety per cent of the time I am like any other in the street and then situations crop up and I lose control," he said.

Hodgson, of Basingstoke, Hampshire, admitted six counts of indecent assault, four of indecency with a child and five counts of taking indecent photographs, and one of unlawful escape.



Last post: Musician Karl Long at the Marines' School of Music which leaves its barracks in Deal, Kent, next week

Photograph: Edward Sykes

Judge tells Labour to reconsider ballot

BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

A High Court judge yesterday ordered Tony Blair and the Labour Party's national executive to reconsider their refusal to re-run a controversial selection ballot at Swindon North.

Sir John Vinelott indicated that the decision of the Labour leadership had been based on a misleading presentation of the facts by Peter Coleman, the party's director of development.

Last month the NEC voted by 14 votes to 9 to set up a sub-committee to appoint a Labour parliamentary candidate for the constituency rather than order a fresh vote.

The first ballot in September was won by Michael Wills, a London-based television producer. However, the runner-up, Jim D'Avila, a Rover car factory convenor for the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union, alleged that there had been irregularities.

The bitterness engendered by the dispute has been characterised as a battle between a London "lunatic" and a local working class lad, although the

party leadership insists that this is an oversimplification.

In his judgment, Sir John conceded he had no power to order the Labour Party to change a "political" decision and refused to grant an injunction to Mr D'Avila, who was backed by his union.

"The only fair course for Mr D'Avila and the local electorate is to ask the NEC to take a fresh look at this, free

from the accusations made by Mr Coleman, which were not fair to Mr D'Avila," the judge said.

The veteran Labour campaigner for the disabled, Alf Morris, last night said he was retiring at the next election. Mr Morris, MP for Wythenshawe, Manchester, who celebrates his 65th birthday today, has a majority of 11,996.

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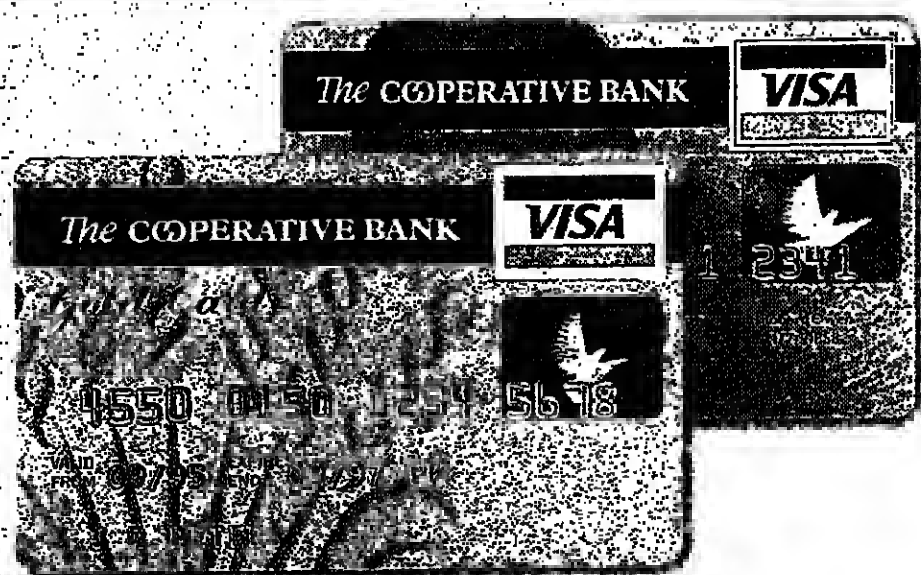
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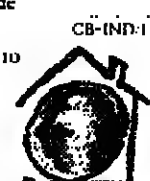
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Doctor used patients as guinea pigs

A Merseyside doctor, who used his patients as guinea-pigs for drug trials without their knowledge or consent, was struck off the medical register yesterday.

Dr Geoffrey Fairhurst, 57, of Warrington, Cheshire, was told his name would be taken off the register after a three-day hearing at the General Medical Council in London found him guilty of using his patients as unwitting participants in trials of potentially dangerous drugs, for which he received payments of £15,000.

Dr Fairhurst had been accused of forging signatures of four patients at his surgery in St Helens, Merseyside, without their written or verbal consent.

He was said to have been caught out when a partner at the surgery, Dr David Edwards, "turned whistleblower" and reported him to the GMC.

After the decision, Miss Rosalind Foster, barrister to the GMC, told its professional conduct committee this was an example of "the bigger they come, the harder they fall".

Dr Fairhurst, a government advisor on health and a former JP, was also chairman of a medical ethics committee.

Patients had "an absolute right" to decide whether to participate in drug trials after being given full information.

"You have found that four patients in three trials have been denied that right."

The doctor who had "blown the whistle" had been badly affected and had to accept "a great deal of vitriol". She said the

activities of Dr Fairhurst had "a grave potential for harm".

The hearing was told of bitter disagreement between the two doctors. Dr Fairhurst, had been paid sums of money by Glaxo Pharmaceutical and other drug companies between 1988 and 1995. Miss Foster said Dr Edwards decided to become a "whistleblower" because he was concerned for the safety and welfare of patients.

Dr Edwards claimed to have discovered dishonesty and the falsification of drug records for trials, mainly for treatments for heart complaints and high blood pressure.

Nicola Davies QC, for Fairhurst, said the case had a "deeply unhappy background".

Dr Edwards had a strong dislike for Dr Fairhurst. Further the GMC could not prove

forensically who had written the false signatures on consent forms. She was not suggesting the patients were lying, but it was significant they had all been in ill health and on a number of medications for many years.

The committee was later considering whether the doctor was guilty of serious professional misconduct.

Sir Donald Irvine, president of the GMC and chairman of the professional conduct committee, told Dr Fairhurst he had abused the trust of patients and undermined the medical profession. Sir Donald also encouraged other doctors to report malpractice after hearing how colleague Dr David Edwards and Dr Min Shah blew the whistle on Dr Fairhurst.

Striking Dr Fairhurst from the register he said: "Trust lies at the heart of the practice of medicine. Patients must be able to trust doctors with their lives and well being. That trust must not be abused."

"Medical research is fundamental to the advance of medical practice and must always be conducted with scrupulous honesty and integrity. Where doctors intend to involve patients in clinical trials, it is essential that they first give those patients a proper explanation."

"Patients have a right to know what it involves and understand the implications for them before they are invited to take part. No trial should ever be carried out without the consent of the patient."



Geoffrey Fairhurst: Caught out by whistle-blower



Theatre of the absurd: Car boot sales offer 'the grotesque, the ridiculous, and the hilarious' Photograph: Geraint Lewis

Boot sales trade on 'carnival spirit'

GLENDIA COOPER

Car boot sales are not just stalling in the rain and the mud but a video that you know will never work.

According to investigation, boot sales offer an anarchic, family, "carnavalesque" experience, are truly democratic and can earn a vendor £800 a weekend.

The report, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, reveals that an estimated 1 million people go to car boot sales every weekend, not just to pick up bargains, but because they enjoy the experience of haggling and the theatrical performances of the sellers.

The secret of the sales' success since the 1970s, is the different experience they offer from the conventions and predictability of the shopping mall.

"Much of the pleasure comes from putting one's skills against others: from knowing that things might not be what they seem, that they almost certainly won't work... but there's just a chance that they might - and that would make something a 'real bargain'."

Dr Louise Crewe, one of the authors of the report, said:

Although the opportunity to pick up bargains was one of the main draws, researchers found consumers were attracted by the spectacle and the ability of the

boot fair to capture "the absurd, the grotesque, the ridiculous and the downright hilarious".

Regular sellers perform. Some adopt the style of the market stall holder, others act like hawkers or peddlers and others take on the conventions of the fairground - "roll up, roll up" - or the comedy act.

"For [amateur] booters] the sense of carnivalesque comes from... the sheer absurdity that they can participate in a phenomenon which entails getting up at the crack of dawn on a Sunday morning, driving to a remote location... parking with hundreds of others before day-break, often in rain and mud," added Dr Crewe.

The report found boot sales attract people of every social class and age, scotching the notion that boot sales are the preserve of "recessionary Britain's underclass". Only 4 per cent were unemployed.

The average "booter" spends £7.96 at each sale and buys eight items. Sellers can make a profit of about £30 each and in some cases up to £800 a weekend.

Many local authorities were worried about boot sales flouting retail legislation - especially trading standards. Many perceived them as places where petty criminals flourished.

But Dr Crewe said: "Car boot sales are clearly here for the long run."

Family's 'strain' over coma mum case

The husband of the Scottish right-to-die patient Janet Johnstone told last night of the "tremendous strain" his family has been under after hearing that five judges had delayed a decision on the case.

In the latest stage of a protracted court battle, Scotland's top judges agreed in opinions released yesterday that the Court of Session in Edinburgh had the power to make a recommendation that doctors at Law Hospital in Carlisle, Lanarkshire, should be allowed to withdraw artificial feeding from Mrs Johnstone, 53. But they said the civil courts could not give doctors immunity from prosecution.

The case - the first in Scotland - has now been referred back to a single judge, Lord Cameron of Lochbroom, who heard evidence earlier and asked for guidance from senior judges. His ruling is expected within the next few weeks.

Mrs Johnstone has been in a coma since taking a drug overdose in January 1992.

Her husband Peter, of Allanton, Lanarkshire, said: "Janet would have wanted to die in peace and with dignity. The decision is taking so long. The whole family has been put under a tremendous strain because of it. I feel so helpless."

The hospital had asked the Court of Session to rule that doctors may "lawfully discontinue" treatment of Mrs Johnstone. However, medical experts, supported by the woman's family, say she is in a persistent vegetative state with no prospect of recovery. However, they are afraid that they could be charged in the criminal courts if they withdraw feeding and let her die.

DAILY Mirror

THE PAPER — THE WRITERS



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Polly Peck scandal: Former financier Elizabeth Forsyth faces years in prison as her disgraced employer languishes in hiding

Banker jailed over £400,000 PPI theft

Elizabeth Forsyth, a former banker, was convicted at the Old Bailey today of laundering £400,000 stolen by her ex-employer Asil Nadir from his public company Polly Peck International.

Forsyth, 59, was remanded in custody by Mr Justice Tucker for pre-sentence reports: a defence application for bail was turned down. The judge warned her to be under "no illusion as to the likely nature of the sentence".

Forsyth, from Great Dunmow in Essex, had denied two charges of handling the stolen cash in October 1989.

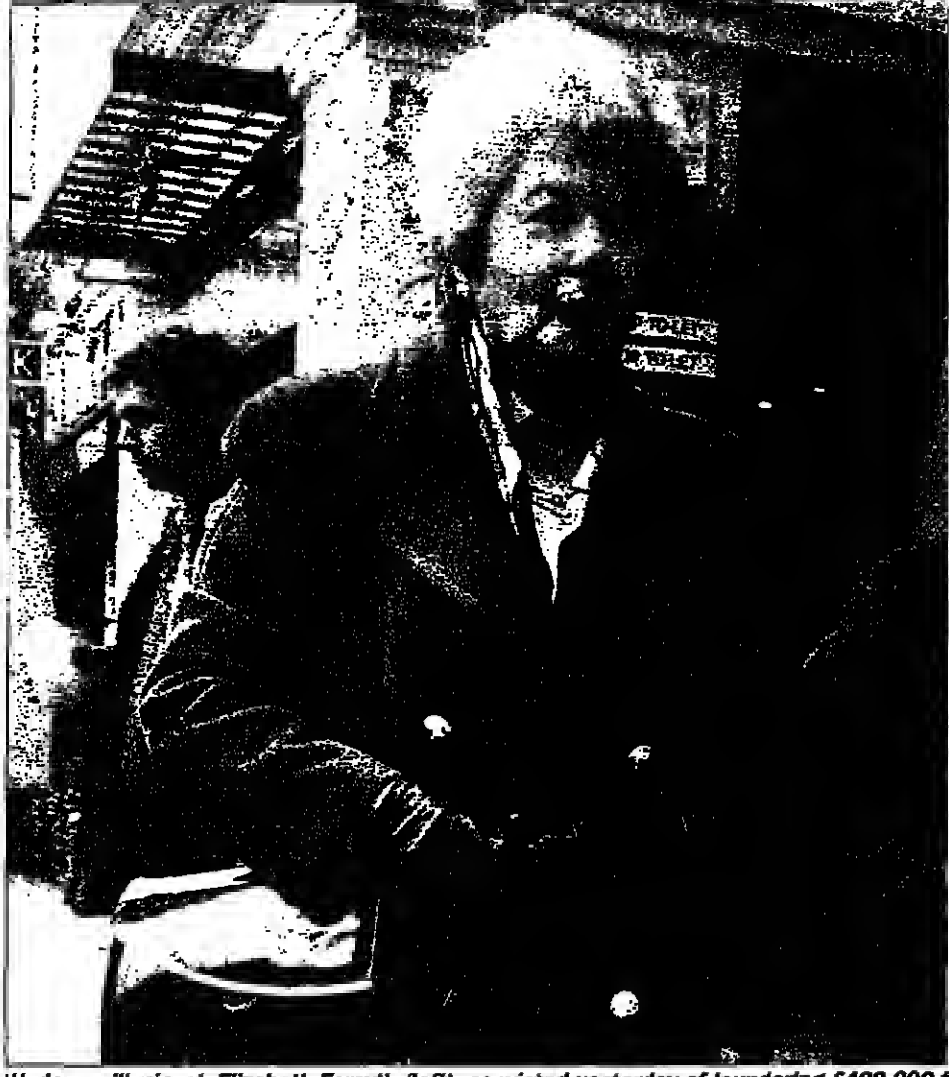
Lawyers for Asil Nadir are now expected to apply for the £30m theft charges against the fugitive businessman to be thrown out. His solicitor Peter Krivinkas said Nadir planned to apply to the High Court for the case to be dropped on the grounds of abuse of process. Nadir alleges general abuse, but the claim is understood to centre on the Serious Fraud Office's handling of the case and prejudicial media coverage.

The jury's verdict today, in essence, also convicts the fugitive tycoon, in his absence, of stealing from Polly Peck — a charge which he was facing when he jumped bail three years ago, four months before he was due to stand trial, and fled to North Cyprus.

The jury of seven women and five men, who deliberated on the verdict for nearly 12 hours, were told that before they could find Forsyth guilty that the Crown had first to prove that Nadir had stolen the money.

As chairman of South Audley Management (SAM) Forsyth managed the Nadir family's private businesses and wealth. She had helped Nadir to siphon cash along a circuitous route through Swiss and English bank accounts to pay his private debts, including a large share-dealing bill.

The prosecution said that in October 1989 Forsyth went to Geneva to withdraw £400,000 in cash. The following day she deposited just over £300,000 in a different bank with instructions that it should be transferred to AJ Bekhor, a London stockbroker to whom Nadir owed money. Forsyth returned to Britain the next day and gave the remaining cash to a chauffeur to bank. It was to pay money owed by Baggrave Farm —



'Under no illusions': Elizabeth Forsyth (left), convicted yesterday of laundering £400,000 for her former boss Asil Nadir (right)



Photograph: Reuters

A Leicestershire estate owned by Nadir.

Forsyth maintained she had been sent to Geneva by Nadir simply to "hold the hands" of his bankers there following the Black Friday crash on the US markets. While in Geneva she said she was asked by a former director of SAM to withdraw the cash and transfer it to London. She claimed she had no knowledge of the money's origin and had no reason to believe anything she was doing was unlawful. Geoffrey Robertson QC, her counsel, said Forsyth had been simply doing her duty when she was ordered to carry out the transaction.

The SFO say they are intent on prosecuting Nadir, although he remains a fugitive in Cyprus. A warrant is out for his arrest and he has been placed on Interpol lists.

Forsyth had herself gone to Northern Cyprus in early 1992. She had been questioned by the SFO the previous year, and in the summer of 1992 she learnt that the SFO wanted to interview her again, and in September 1994 she decided to return to Britain to face the music.

Forsyth was on bail throughout the five-week trial and was supported on many days by her 89-year-old mother.

Asil Nadir had been regarded as one of the wealthiest men in Britain. His £1.3bn PPI empire collapsed soon after the Serious Fraud Office raided SAM's Mayfair premises in 1990.

As a businessman, Nadir had won Queen's Awards for Industry, and had been invited to 10 Downing Street several times by the then Prime Minister Mrs Thatcher. Mr Robinson said, adding that Nadir had also contributed large sums to the Conservative Party.

BBC to screen Saudi 'justice'

MARIANNE MACDONALD
Media Correspondent

The BBC yesterday came under fierce criticism for plans to show a Saudi Arabian criminal being beheaded with a sword, in a move that could further undermine Britain's relationship with Saudi Arabia.

The shots of the public execution are due to be shown on Panorama on 1 April.

The documentary was triggered by controversy over the Saudi dissident Mohammed al-Masari, 49, whose deportation from London was ordered after he allegedly attempted to undermine the Saudi government.

Mr Masari was tortured for six months and lost his job as a professor of physics after he established the Committee for the Defence of Legitimate Rights, a human rights group, in Saudi Arabia in 1993.

The Home Office is now reconsidering its decision to deport the Islamic activist, who has also embarrassed the British government by repeatedly denouncing the "corruption" of the Saudi royal family.

The documentary is likely to further sour relations between Britain and Saudi Arabia. In its listing, the BBC describes the country as "what many consider to be the world's most brutal and despotic regime".

It continues: "Last year nearly 200 people were publicly beheaded in Saudi, many for offences involving trafficking, alcohol and adultery, yet the British government does not dare to criticise its close Middle East ally for fear of losing lucrative arms contracts."

UK exports to Saudi Arabia totalled £1.5bn in 1994, but Saudi Arabia has indicated that if the Home Office refuses to deport Mr Masari it could withdraw business contracts with Britain.

Roger Gale, chairman of the influential Tory backbench media committee, said yesterday: "If they are going to show decapitation I would regard this as wholly gratuitous unpleasantness."

A BBC spokeswoman said: "It is not sensational. You do not actually see heads rolling on pavements."

Travellers may fight Gummer's refusal of 'living village'

JOJO MOVES

A group of travellers may appeal to the High Court after the Secretary of State for the Environment turned down planning permission for them to build an "experimental sustainable living system" in a field they had bought in Somerset.

In what was seen as a test case, the 20 members of the Kingshill Collective were the

subject of a planning inquiry likely to set a precedent for "alternative dwellers" across Britain.

Nearly two years ago they bought four acres of land near Glastonbury and applied for permission to set up home. Their alternative village, comprising 16 "benders" — semi-permanent homes made from largely organic materials — takes its power supply from solar

panels, uses dead wood for heat and draws water from a bore hole at the top of the field.

But it was denied permission by Mendip District Council, which said it was seeking to protect the rural and visual character of the area. The refusal and appeal triggered several cases where John Gummer, the Secretary of State, "called in" theirs and similar judgements for reconsideration.

In a letter Mr Gummer, said: "The considerations favouring the grant of planning permission include continued security, savings to the public purse, sustainability and experimental value..."

But he added: "The view is taken that all of these considerations... are not of sufficient strength to outweigh the strong planning objections, including the highway objections."

The inspector's report accompanying the letter referred to the "appreciated efforts of the collective to minimise their impact on the environment within the site... There was considerable public support for this project and no one doubted the sincerity of the group's aims and intentions."

But it said that local residents were concerned that the granting of planning permission

would set a precedent that would encourage further travellers to settle.

"My view is that a favourable decision here would lead to similar applications and consents for temporary sites for benders or tents with a serious cumulative impact on the rural landscape and the provisions of public services," the inspector said. The collective has 12 months to find new homes.

Ravi Low Beer of the Public Law Project, who has represented the collective, said that the decision was "disappointing but not unexpected" and that they were considering ways to appeal. "We say that these people shouldn't be evicted, that once humanitarian issues have been raised the onus is on the public bodies concerned to show why people should be evicted," he said.

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Stargazers hope cloudbreak will give sight of Hyakutake

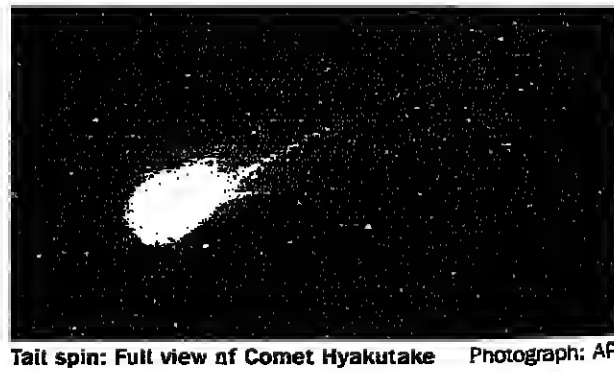
TOM WILKIE and
PAUL FIELD

Britain's clouded skies have so far denied thousands of amateur and professional astronomers any glimpse of the brightest comet to grace our skies for 20 years.

And the disappointment is likely to continue, according to weathermen. The BBC Radio forecaster Philip Eden reported that the only breaks in cloud covering Britain today are expected to be in south-east England and north-west Scotland. By tomorrow, only stargazers in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland will stand a chance of spotting the comet.

However, by Monday – the day of comet Hyakutake's closest approach to Earth – there should be some hope for people in the north-west of England. Only by the middle of the week might there be a break in the cloud over eastern England.

If the clouds do lift next week, the comet should be



Tail spin: Full view of Comet Hyakutake Photograph: AP

among the brightest objects in the sky, easily bright enough to be seen with the naked eye. It will be visible virtually all night from Britain. Looking east, it will appear among the stars close to the constellation of the Plough, gradually changing its position in the sky in successive evenings before disappearing from view in the vicinity of the Pleiades at the end of April. Contrary to popular belief, comets do not flash across the sky, so Hyakutake will actually

the sun. Kinks often appear in this tail and sometimes it appears to drop off altogether.

Ionised water is an important constituent of the plasma tail and is formed by water molecules escaping the nucleus and then being ionised by the sun's ultraviolet radiation.

Among the many observations which will be made of the comet around the world, at the Mullard Space Science Laboratory of University College London, the astronomer Geraint Jones will be looking just at the light from this ionised water molecule, by using a colour filter to block out all other wavelengths. The study will cast light on the chemistry of the comet and trace how the molecules are accelerated through space by the solar wind.

The comet was discovered in late January by a Japanese amateur astronomer, Yuji Hyakutake, using large binoculars. Its orbit is thought to take around 18,000 years to complete a circuit around the sun.

Dusted off: Marilyn Dalton, general manager of Audley End House at Saffron Walden, Essex, arranging one of its tens of thousands of stuffed birds and animals for the new season's re-opening on 3 April Photograph: Brian Hains

Barclay brothers seek 'UDI' for island

CHRIS BLACKHURST

David and Frederick Barclay, the reclusive multi-millionaire owners of the Ritz Hotel in London and the *Scotsman* and *European* newspapers, yesterday formally applied for effective independence for Brecqhou, the tiny island they own in the Channel Islands.

Also yesterday, a court in St Malo, France, began hearing a complaint by the Barclay brothers that they were falsely accused of corruption in a BBC interview, broadcast in Guernsey last October, and heard on the French mainland.

In a move disclosed in the *Independent*, the Barclays are effectively declaring UDI for Brecqhou, where they are currently building a mock-Gothic cliff-top fortress home. Their application may ultimately have to be resolved by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

If successful, the brothers, who eschew all personal publicity, will avoid paying Sark's minimal taxes and will have a tighter control over who can, and cannot, visit their domain. They have been complaining to Michael Beaumont, the Seigneur, or governor, of Sark, about the island's police force visiting Brecqhou.

The Barclays, who own other hotels and numerous properties around the world, are worth an estimated £600m. They told Guernsey's Royal Court, the island's equivalent of the High Court in England, yesterday, that in their view Brecqhou forms no part of Sark, its

larger neighbour, which traditionally has ruled over the island. Giving their addresses as Avenue Princess Grace, Monte Carlo, the brothers demanded repayment from the Sark authorities of £179,000 in property tax they were required to pay when they bought Brecqhou in 1993 for a reported £2.3m.

In their declaration, made for them by Lloyd Strappin, one of the Channel Islands' leading lawyers, they declared that "Brecqhou forms no part of the fief of Sark", that a law of 1611 banning the break-up of Sark did not apply to their island; and "that the Court of the Seigneur of Sark [the island's highest authority] has no jurisdiction over Brecqhou".

Mr Beaumont, who inherited the title from the legendary Dame of Sark, asked for more time to prepare his defence. The court granted a request from his lawyer, David Le Marquand, who said the Seigneur would need "lots of time".

If the St Malo case goes against the BBC, the judgment is likely to be seen as a significant legal precedent and may pave the way for further actions against media, printing or broadcasting in the UK and being read and heard in France.

The Barclay twins are claiming criminal libel damages of £108,000. They complain that in the BBC Radio Guernsey interview with *Observer* journalist John Sweeney, they were wrongly accused of having engaged in acts that could be qualified as corruption. The BBC has said it will contest the allegations "vigorously".

Screening by GPs faces axe

NICHOLAS TIMMINS
Public Policy Editor

The Government is prepared to consider abolishing an £85m-a-year health promotion package undertaken by family doctors which academics say is largely a waste of taxpayers' money.

The scheme involves GPs counting their patients aged 15-74 who smoke, recording their blood pressure, alcohol consumption and obesity; their family history of heart disease and stroke, and offering them advice on a better lifestyle.

The scheme – which pays family doctors thousands of pounds a year if they hit all their targets – has been one of the more controversial parts of the contract the Government imposed on GPs in 1990. GPs say it is bureaucratic, untargeted and involves counting numbers rather than genuinely intervening to improve health.

Stephen Dorrell, Secretary of State for Health, has told GPs' leaders at the British Medical Association that he recognises "the dissatisfaction" within the profession over the programme, adding: "I am therefore willing to consider its abolition."

An evaluation in 1994 of the British Family Heart Study, which uses intensive interventions by nurses to try to persuade individuals to change their lifestyle, concluded it was "of little benefit". The gains from the less-intensive programme most GPs offer were therefore "likely to be even smaller", the study concluded.

A cut in heart disease and stroke is one of the Government's *Health of the Nation* targets, but the study said focusing on those who have heart disease or are known to be at high risk was likely to give better results.

Dr Ian Bogle, chairman of the BMA's family doctors' committee, welcomed Mr Dorrell's move yesterday, but stressed that neither Mr Dorrell nor GPs wanted to put an end to health promotion in general practice. "It's just that we want to get rid of this particular programme and the way it is constructed."

The change is likely to come as part of a new contract which Mr Dorrell has indicated will be an offer if he and GPs' leaders can agree on changes that will shift more of the work traditionally done in hospitals into general practice.

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international

Kremlin digs in heels over Nato expansion

TONY BARBER
Europe Editor

The United States and Russia failed yesterday to narrow their differences over Nato's plans to incorporate former Communist countries in central and eastern Europe.

Speaking after a meeting in Moscow between President Boris Yeltsin and the US Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, Russia's Foreign Minister, Yevgeny Primakov, said: "Russia will never accept Nato enlargement, not because it has any right of veto, but because it will not tolerate a worsening geopolitical situation and will stand by its interests."

Russia's leadership regards Nato's planned expansion as a challenge to Russian security that could throw Europe back into a second "Ice Age" of East-West confrontation. But Mr Christopher, speaking in Prague last Wednesday to 12 central and eastern European foreign ministers, reaffirmed that Nato had committed itself to expansion and said the region's new democracies would not be kept waiting forever.

Mr Primakov suggested a

compromise might be possible if Nato did not move its "military infrastructure" into potential new member-states such as the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. However, both Nato and the three central European states are adamant that Russia cannot dictate the terms of their admission into the alliance.

Nato's Secretary-General, Javier Solana, visited Moscow earlier in the week and urged Russian leaders to recognise that Nato no longer resembled the military alliance that it was in Cold War times. However,



Mr Christopher: Adamant

the Russians repeated their argument that Nato's expansion would represent an unacceptable extension of Western influence up to Russia's borders. Despite the clash of views over Nato, Mr Christopher made clear that the US still had faith in Mr Yeltsin's reformist potential and hoped he would emerge victorious from next June's presidential election. He said that President Bill Clinton's policy was "to support the reforms and those who are enthusiastic about reforms and who are carrying out reforms. That has brought him into strong support for President Yeltsin on prior occasions."

Mr Clinton is due to travel to Moscow on 19-20 April for a summit with Mr Yeltsin on nuclear security. The visit is likely to be interpreted as a show of US solidarity with Mr Yeltsin.

Mr Yeltsin faces a strong challenge from the Communist leader, Gennady Zyuganov, whose party sent shock waves across eastern Europe last week by pushing a resolution through the Russian parliament that called for the restoration of the Soviet Union. However, the parliament avoided a clash with

Mr Christopher yesterday by ignoring a draft resolution from a Communist deputy that denounced the Secretary of State for criticising last week's vote.

Mr Yeltsin, the chief architect of the Soviet Union's dissolution in 1991, has declared himself firmly opposed to Mr Zyuganov's stated aim of recreating the Soviet state by peaceful means. However, after his talks with Mr Christopher, Mr Yeltsin was playing host to the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, who advocates the integration of his country with Russia.

"I will propose to Mr Yeltsin the signing of a treaty free of all ambiguities and creating union institutions of a supranational nature," Mr Lukashenko said before leaving Minsk for Moscow. When he visited Moscow last month, he and Mr Yeltsin signed documents on integration that have yet to be made public.

The Russian authorities have not been entirely enthusiastic about Mr Lukashenko's proposals in the past, partly because they would require substantial Russian economic support for Belarus.



Silent witness: Madeleine Albright, US ambassador to the United Nations, at the site of the mass grave, 100km north of Srebrenica. Photograph: AFP

Proof of Serb crimes revealed

EMMA DALY
Sarajevo

The US has, for the first time, released aerial photographs apparently showing the mass burial of Muslim men from Srebrenica who were executed by Bosnian Serbs after the fall of the enclave in July 1995.

Madeleine Albright, the US ambassador to the United Nations, visited the site at a farm in eastern Bosnia yesterday, then issued photographs to journalists in Sarajevo.

"There is evidence that this is a place where there was systematic murdering of large numbers of people - around 1,000," Ms Albright said after her visit to Branjevo farm.

Some evidence for the massacre has come from Serbs who admitted their involvement. They say Muslims were rounded up in Potocari, where Dutch UN troops in Srebrenica were based, then taken by bus north to the site at Branjevo. There, unarmed and defenceless, the men were led out, 10 at a time, and shot.

The two photos, before and after, show an ordinary ploughed field at Branjevo farm on 5 July and 17 July, a week after the fall of Srebrenica, the field shows the tracks of heavy vehicles, an excavator at work, a mound of earth, and a large number of objects identified by US officials as bodies.

The Yugoslav war crimes tribunal yesterday issued its first indictments for war crimes allegedly committed against Serbs. Three of those indicted are Bosnian Muslims.

Russians try new tactics to flush out Chechen fighters

It is growing dark and we are in a red-brick building which could easily be mistaken for an English parish hall, were it not in a Chechen village in the middle of a war zone.

To its occupants, a group of separatist fighters, it is headquarters, a place to plan nocturnal raids on the marauding Russian army. To the Russians, it is a pocket of resistance, one of those targets which they are under orders to destroy.

But to me, a journalist seeking interviews, it seems more like a local social club, a version of the British Legion in the Caucasus. In the kitchen, two women are peeling onions and boiling water for tea. On the bashed-in sofas and armchairs around the room sit a handful of men, some in fighter's clothes, others in mufti. Every generation is represented here, from a pale boy in fatigues who looks far too young to kill, to a grizzled one-eyed veteran, who looks far too old to do so.

One of the Chechens tells us that the Russian army is less than 10 miles away; we can hear occasional artillery fire and exchanges of machine-gun fire. Two or three fighters, mere youths, lounge around and smoke on the balcony, apparently keeping watch, with their rifles nearby. There is probably no need. The rebels have many supporters out there and the apple orchards and the muddy lanes, law-abiding residents who would none the less alert them if the Russians arrived.

The leader, Doku Makhayev, a lean man with a dense black beard, is sitting on a bed in the corner, under a wall decorated with posters of the guerrilla leaders Dzhokhar Dudayev and Shamil Basayev and a Chechen flag. He is in uniform, and car-

Phil Reeves finds a group of separatists in Chechnya optimistic at the prospect of a new onslaught

ries a knife with a fox's-foot handle in his breast pocket, a pistol at his hip, and the TV channel controller in his hand.

Before the war, he was a construction worker. Now, at 41, though a father of five, he is a full-time fighter: "regimental and deputy chief commander of the south-western sector, known as Sector Number One. He has 11 villages on his patch, including this one."

For him, these are particularly troubled times. The Russians have launched an

"We have arms and transport, our people are rested and our wounded are being taken care of"

offensive in which they are trying to flush out Mr Dudayev's forces from the villages by persuading elders to sign agreements, promising to expel the fighters from their midst. Those that refuse to do so risk joining the lengthening list of settlements which the Russians have been - and, in some cases, this week, still were - bombarding.

"In this village, people are not going to sign," said Mr Makhayev. "There are certain circles who are willing, but they wouldn't dare." His men were therefore stockpiling weapons, and preparing their defences in readiness for a Russian onslaught.

Last month, he said, the separatists held a series of rallies

now showing a prestigious Russian current affairs programme. He explains that he arrested one of its journalists, for editing pictures of corpses into a recorded interview with Dudayev. He only let his captive go after the programme agreed to apologise; now he wanted to see if it would keep the promise. It did. "Excellent," he said, quietly.

It was a small triumph. Mr Makhayev dreams of bigger victories: winning the right for a referendum on independence and the departure of the Russians. He insists that there would be no massive reprisals, and denies President Yeltsin's claim that an all-out withdrawal would lead to civil war.

"The Muslim courts will deal with 10 or 15 traitors who invited the Russian troops here, but we will find a common language. We are all Chechens, and all of the same blood." What of the hundreds of Chechens, the local Ministry of Interior police, who fought against them in Grozny? "We will forgive them."

For now, this is fantasy. He must focus on the war. He says Mr Dudayev's forces, in absolute disarray last summer, are now stronger and more numerous. "We have arms, we have transport, our people are well rested, and our wounded guys are being taken care of." They are planning another spectacular assault, "a blockbuster movie," he says.

And, sitting in their village headquarters, he and his men are looking forward to the summer. "Allah helps us by sending fog at night. There will be green leaves on the trees soon, and they will screen our manoeuvres." What no one in that building knows, is whether they will live to see the summer, when it comes.

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Proof of Serb crimes revealed

THE DAILY

Tibetan nomads near starvation after hard winter

RAYMOND WHITAKER

Yaks are among the hardest creatures on earth, but not even these long-haired beasts have been able to withstand the cruellest winter in over a century in the heart of Asia.

Months of drought on the 18,000ft Tibetan plateau, followed by the worst blizzards in living memory and night temperatures of -45C, may kill up to a million yaks, cattle and sheep.

This is a disaster for 100,000 Tibetan nomads, who are entirely dependent on their herds and now face starvation. The Chinese authorities in Sichuan and Qinghai provinces have used up their relief supplies, and are turning to outside agencies for help.

Serge Depotter, a foreign relief worker who recently visited the worst-affected areas, said several dozen people had died from cold, and 28,000 more

were suffering from frostbite and snow blindness. Respiratory infections, including tuberculosis, have become rife among the malnourished population.

Mr Depotter's organisation, the Belgian branch of Médecins Sans Frontières, has organised a truck convoy to bring 1,200 tonnes of barley, medicines and other supplies to the starving nomads. "It is no longer possible to try to save the livestock, only the people," said an official of the Qinghai provincial government. But the herdsmen are entirely dependent on their animals for food, fuel, clothing and hides for their tents.

Sean Mayne Smith, a photographer who returned this week from the disaster area, said the Chinese authorities had had to disperse the nomads from giving relief food to their animals. "Without their herds, these people have nothing," he said. "They are as poor as the people of Ethiopia."



The carcass of a yak which died in the exceptionally harsh winter in Qinghai province, China, north of the Himalayas. Photograph: Sean Mayne Smith

Somali villagers rescue relief workers

KARIN DAVIES
Associated Press Writer

Nairobi — Five foreign aid workers taken hostage at a Somali airport by a disgruntled former United Nations contractor were rescued by armed villagers who fired on the kidnappers, Unicef said yesterday. A young boy was shot in the head by one of the kidnappers during the confrontation and was in a coma, said Pierce Gerety, the agency's Somalia representative, who is based in Nairobi.

Villagers became suspicious of the minivan and pick-up truck loaded with five foreigners and 10 gunmen as it passed through Farsaley, about 75 miles south-west of Mogadishu, at dusk on Thursday.

"They realised this was a kidnapping in progress," said Mr Gerety. "They shot at the kidnappers to stop them. One bullet went into the minivan. The kidnappers shot a kid." The heavily armed villagers surrounded the van, and forced the gunmen to pass their weapons out the windows of their vehicles, Mr Gerety said, quoting one of the hostages. Police took the kidnappers into custody, he added.

The village is in an area served by foreign relief agencies. The hostages spent the night in the UN minivan, and yesterday drove back to Mogadishu, the Somali capital. The Unicef workers included a British security officer, William Cundie, as well as a Nepalese, a Sudanese, an Indian, and the American head of the World Health Organisation in Somalia.

The five were taken by an armed gang led by a Somali who formerly rented a vehicle to Unicef, and was unhappy his contract had ended.

International aid organisations employed hundreds of Somalis in the early 1990s until the UN mission to Somalia pulled out a year ago. Armed groups have regularly taken hostages to exact what they feel are arrears in wages.

Taiwan ponders price of democracy

As polling begins under the glare of mainland China, activists recall the sacrifices they made, writes **Teresa Poole** in Taipei

If things had been different, Liang-chun and Ting-chun would have been old enough to vote in Taiwan's first democratic presidential election today.

Instead, their parents, political activists, will this morning reflect on the price their family has paid in the Taiwanese people's struggle for reform. On 28 February 1980 a man entered their guarded home in Taipei and stabbed to death the six-year-old twin girls and their grandmother. When their elder sister returned from school she too was attacked and only just survived.

The slaughter was probably the worst atrocity of Taiwan's recent political history. Neither the date of the murders nor the victims was a matter of chance. The day marked the anniversary of the 1947 incident which led to the killing of up to 20,000 Taiwanese by ruling Kuomintang (KMT) nationalists determined to crush calls for reform.

The two girls were daughters of Lin Yi-hsiung, a lawyer and a member of the Formosa

group of pro-democracy activists, who had appeared in court that morning on sedition charges. The murdered old lady was Mr Lin's mother. No one has been punished and, despite the improved political environment, no official inquiry has been held into the deaths.

Mr Lin's wife, Fang Su-min, still asks: "After my husband's arrest, my house was under 24-hour surveillance. The guards knew if anybody came to my home. How could a murderer have entered my home, and killed three people?" It is presumed a pro-KMT faction probably carried out the killings as a warning to the opposition.

As Peng Ming-min, the candidate from the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) reminded everyone this week, Taiwan's evolution to democracy has not been as bloodless as is sometimes por-

trayed. For decades the KMT ruthlessly wiped out opposition. "We worked so hard to get this election," said Antonio Chiang, an editor of political magazines. After the murders, Mr Lin spent four-and-a-half years in jail, and a decade in ex-

ile. In the 16 years following that terrible afternoon, Taiwan's political climate has changed greatly. Martial law ended in 1987 and opposition parties legalised in 1989. Last night, in a display of democracy, all four candidates held rallies and marches throughout Taiwan.

The institute is in Ilan county, two hours' drive from Taipei, one of the most solid areas of DPP support. People in Ilan insist reform still has some way to go. "Lee is the worst president, because he allows corruption and the government relationship with the mafia," said Yu

Hsiang-neng, who was working in the DPP Ilan headquarters. Do Ilan people still hate the KMT? "Yes," said Ms Fang. Twelve years ago Ilan was one of the first counties to elect an opposition mayor.

But it is Peking, not the Taiwanese, which has defined the agenda for today's polls. China's military threats mean Taiwan's international status is the crucial issue. Most Taiwanese will tell you the same thing: in practice Taiwan is an independent state, has been under separate government for more than a century, and reunification with the Communist People's Republic is unthinkable. Where they disagree is in how to preserve such a fragile status quo and how aggressively to deal with an increasingly belligerent mainland.

Dr Peng of the DPP said the One China fiction should be



Mr Lee: Accused of graft

abandoned in favour of accepting Taiwan's de facto independence; but he would not declare independence unless China invaded. The incumbent KMT President, Mr Lee Teng-hui, denies Peking's allegation that he secretly favours independence but he says China is a cultural entity, and reunification could only occur after the mainland achieves democracy.

That leaves the man most conciliatory towards Peking,

China and US delay defence visits

Peking — China yesterday underscored its anger at US military support for Taiwan, announcing a further delay of its defence minister's long-planned visit to the US, because "the present climate is not favourable". In Washington, however, the Defence Secretary, William Perry, said he had postponed next month's trip.



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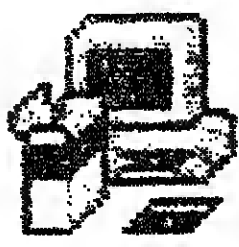


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In the last of our European profiles John Lichfield looks at a most continental city: Birmingham

Brum marches to a happier tune

We are standing in one of the pleasantest squares in Europe, dominated by an impressive, gold-leaf-encrusted Hôtel de Ville. There is a large waterfall-fountain with a recumbent post-modern statue of a huge, female bather. There is a flower stall on the corner, which is reminiscent of Amsterdam. There is a scattering of the ornate advertising pillars which are typical of French cities. There are pigeons.

Unfortunately, it is pouring with rain. But then what do you expect? This is Birmingham and it is March.

Victoria Square, created by removing part of New Street, is the epicentre of Birmingham's efforts over the past 12 years to reinvent itself – largely thanks to cash from the European Union. Nearby there is a pleasant mall with an atrium, the International Conference Centre, a classical concert hall and a canal-side park. Birmingham always had more canals than Venice but you were never previously advised to visit them.

Beyond – not far beyond, admittedly – you come back to the tangle of urban thoroughways and high-rises which squeezed the life out of Birmingham in the late 1960s. It is as if the city had set out to become Detroit, changed its mind and decided to become Lille or Liège or Turin instead.

"It was absolutely a conscious decision, absolutely, to go for the European look," said Tony Bradley, Director of Business Policy at the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry. "The City Council wanted it to look European and they were quite right because Europe is our future. Birmingham is at the centre of one of the great city-regions of Europe and that is the way we feel Europe will go. It will increasingly be dominated, not by nations, but by city-regions."

This article comes at the end of a series in which the Independent attempts to look into the future of the European Union, out from the standard vantage point of national capitals, but from the perspective of its regions: Bordeaux, Bologna, Bavaria and now Birmingham. In Turin next Friday EU heads of government will launch a year-long Inter-governmental



Looking to the future: Birmingham's Victoria Square rivals the more famous city scenes found across the Channel

Conference (IGC) which will try to plot the shape of the European Union for the next century. The received view is that the negotiations will once again see the pro-Europe continental member states and Ireland teaming up against Britain, the perpetually reluctant European.

This may well be so. But our forays into the regions suggest that public opinion – at least, informed business and political opinion – no longer fits either of these traditional moulds. On the continent, post-Maastricht, there is a growing questioning of the purpose and direction of the Union. Outside the fold of the West, there remains great scepticism and uncertainty but also a conviction that Britain's place is in Europe.

David Maxwell is Chief Executive of Birmingham City 2000, a pressure group seeking

to bolster the city's growing reputation as an international services centre. He says the West Midlands was traditionally an inward-looking region, a metal-bashing manufacturer of hardware for Britain and its Empire, with little direct contact with the continent. "We have emerged from the 80s with



much of that industry gone. But that which remains – and the financial service industries which have grown up here – are absolutely committed to the idea of Birmingham, and Britain, as part of European single market.

"There is great suspicion about the idea of more European political integration. Most people can't see the need for it. On the single currency, business here is very divided. But there is also, I think, great unease that the British Government seems always to place Britain on the edge of the debate."

In Victoria Square, I tried for a wider cross-section of Birmingham opinion. In 20 minutes, before the rain destroyed my notebook, I spoke to a dozen or so passers-by. Not one of them was vaguely aware that the EU had invested £200m in the revival of their city since 1984; all spoke with varying degrees of indifference – but no especial hostility – of the future of the European Union.

Of all the people I met more

formally in Birmingham, the one who best summed up the ambivalence of British attitudes was Christopher Spall, senior partner of Barker, Brettell and Duncan, a large firm of patent and trade-mark attorneys. Mr Spall says he has "very strong views" about the EU. "I am strongly against any further bureaucracy and any further political integration. I am strongly against the single currency... I saw Chancellor Kohl on the TV the other night, raving on about federalism. Honestly, all he needed was the small moustache..."

Mr Spall grinned impishly. On the other hand, he points out that his firm – once entirely dependent on winning UK patents for local manufacturing businesses – now depends for its survival on British membership of the EU. One third of its

work is European: acting for British companies who want a European patent, but also for American and Japanese companies who want both British and European patents.

"When they opened the European Patents office in Munich, I heard the worst," he said. "I thought, here we go, European rules and German officialdom. But it hasn't been like that. It works very sensitively and efficiently. We get on with the Germans very well."

Municipally, Birmingham takes its new-found European-ness very seriously. It was one of the five founding members of Euro-city, an urban pressure group which now unites more than 80 EU cities. The city council was one of the first in Britain to have its own representation in Brussels. Birmingham has worked aggressively and intelligently to win EU regional fund grants. "Brussels was ready to entertain, and actively support, regeneration projects... while they were still out of favour in Whitehall," said Gareth Williams, the city's director of European and International Affairs.

But Mr Williams says that Birmingham has found Europe just as invigorating as a habit of mind. "Within Britain, Birmingham will always be Birmingham, the second-city. In Europe, we take our place quite naturally in the first tier of big provincial cities. There is a lot we can learn; there is a lot we can teach. It gives us... a network, and a network which doesn't go through London."

Habit of mind is an important European issue. Mr Williams believes Europe is also a generational issue: younger generations are, he says, much more open to the idea of a European Britain. Maybe.

On the train to Birmingham, I met a young Brummie in his 20s, a *Sim* reader, a van driver out of work because he had lost his driving licence. He cared nothing about European politics. But he was on his way home from Holland, where he had been to register for work.

"I've been there before," he said. "I'm going to get work in the bulb harvest, mate. There's nothing happening in Birmingham. There's nothing happening in this country. They know how to live over there."

IN BRIEF

French back Pacific test ban

Paris — France, the US and Britain will sign the Treaty of Rarotonga, on Monday, turning the South Pacific into a nuclear-free zone, the French Foreign Ministry said yesterday.

The three western powers will sign three protocols of the treaty, banning nuclear weapons and nuclear tests in the region, where France completed a bitterly-disputed series of six nuclear weapons tests in January.

Palestinian hijacker recaptured

Rome — A Palestinian who escaped from jail in Italy where he was serving a sentence for hijacking the *Achille Lauro* cruise liner in 1985 has been recaptured in southern Spain. The Italian Justice Ministry said Maguid al-Molgi had been arrested by Italian detectives with Spanish police help in Silva, southern Spain. The US had offered a \$2m reward for his capture.

Ban on British historian upheld

Munich — A court yesterday upheld an order barring controversial British historian David Irving from entering Germany because of his views on the Holocaust. Mr Irving had appealed against the 1993 decision, imposed after Munich neo-Nazis invited him to appear at an event to mark the 55th anniversary of the Nazis' Kristallnacht pogroms against the Jews.

Mugabe warns party

Harare — Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe ordered his ruling party to address voters' grievances, just days after being re-elected in a one-man presidential race boycotted by the majority of voters. "I believe now is the time to analyse the people's grievances as they expressed them in both their urban and rural setting, and work out urgent and effective ways of addressing them," he told a meeting of his ZANU-PF party.

Leonardo renovation attacked

Paris — A French art historian claimed Italian restorers had stripped away so much from Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper" that they turned his masterpiece into a ghostly image more like a modern painting. Jacques Franck said the team restoring the mural in a Milan church had stripped away all the repaints added since Leonardo painted the work, taking no account of their crucial role in preserving the original.

Athens airport security condemned

Washington — The US said Athens' Hellenikon International Airport did not fully meet internationally established security standards. Chiefly at issue are checkpoint screening procedures, an official said. Standards are set by the International Civil Aviation Organisation.

Queen to visit Holocaust memorial

London — The Queen will visit Umschlagplatz in Warsaw, where Jews began their journey to Treblinka concentration camp, during her trip to Poland next week, Buckingham Palace said yesterday. The announcement is a response to complaints from Jewish leaders that she would not be visiting Auschwitz. The Queen flies to Warsaw on Monday.

Resistance hero dies

Paris — Claude Bourdet, a Resistance hero who survived a Nazi death camp to become an outspoken left-wing journalist criticising racism and French colonial policies, has died. He was 86. In his final years he defended the Bosnian Muslim government and the Palestinian cause.

When a spade is not a spade

Bucharest — An eccentric Transylvanian mayor has come up with an idea to stop city workers leaning on their shovels instead of working, by making the handles too short. "The handles should be shortened so that they can no longer be used as a leaning point by those who meditate while at work," said Gheorghe Funar.

Police end church protest

MARY DEJEVSKY

Paris

French police and riot troops mounted a joint operation at dawn yesterday to evict more than 400 Africans, including about 100 children, from a central Paris church where they had taken refuge. They had occupied the church since Monday in a joint action supported by immigrants and equal rights groups to demand the legalisation of their status in France.

Police stalked out the church from 2am, then launched their raid shortly before six, smashing down the church door.

The police said the operation had been carried out "humanely and with every effort to avoid violence".

While the majority had agreed to leave the church peacefully, more than 70 refused to go. By 9am they were still in the church precincts, sitting defiantly on the cold, wet ground. Surrounded by dozens of police in full riot gear, they were a bizarrely colourful sight amid the rush of morning commuters and shoppers.

A crowd of a hundred or so gathered around the police barriers, some telling the protesters to go back where they had

come from, others shouting their support. Fierce arguments broke out. "I'm Jewish," said one woman, "and we were like them once. Let them stay." The church of St Ambroise is on the edge of the Marais, a traditionally Jewish section of the city.

The Africans, mostly from Mali, Mauritania and Senegal, offered eloquent testimony to the confusion of French immigration laws, which sometimes leave spouses and children with different nationality status. By yesterday evening, the protesters had moved on, occupying a nearby gymnasium.

Turkey adopts Kurdish festival

HUGH POPE

Istanbul

The new Turkish government of Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz this week launched a bloodless takeover of Nevruz, the Kurdish spring equinox festival, an occasion the Kurds had made into a day of protest against Turkish oppression from the late 1980s.

A new jerry-built platform of Turkey's state ideology turned Nevruz into a re-discovered spring festival of all the 150 million people of the Turkish world.

One of the more bizarre results is that the spring festival is now officially encouraged in Turkey while liberal Germany has banned it because celebrations had turned into violent demonstrations by the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK).

In Turkey, however, the PKK is banned and, despite new PKK threats against Turkish tourism and cities, it is militarily weakened after 11 years of fighting in which 18,500 people have died. The establishment is now debating what to do next.

Faint hints from Mr Yilmaz about allowing Kurdish broadcasting, education and free cultural expression have found few echoes. But the meaninglessness of the old state nationalism was underlined by the way the establishment was able to adopt the new Turkish-style Nevruz without missing a beat.

In the capital, Ankara, President Suleyman Demirel fired a pistol to start the First International Nevruz quarter-marathon. The Turkish national lottery had a special Nevruz draw. Pamphlets arguing the long "Turkish" tradition of Nevruz were posted to all and sundry.

Meanwhile, down in the Kurdish south-east, Kurds who used to use the day to defy the Turkish authorities - 100 people were killed in Nevruz clashes in 1992 - were encouraged to gather to celebrate in stadiums. Soldiers on checkpoints were ordered to greet wayfarers with the greeting "Happy Nevruz".

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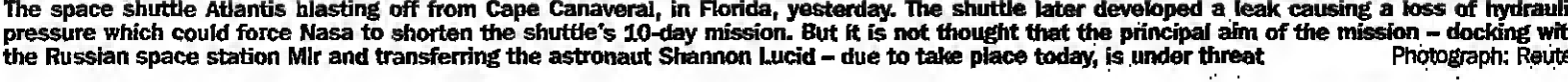
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stress that another Hamas bomb in Israel could finally destroy Labour's chances. It is also true that the radical right has not changed its views, although it has been more discreet since Mr Rabin was murdered. Mr Peres says that the Shin Bet security agency has told him that there are thousands willing to kill him in order to prevent Israel withdrawal from the West Bank.

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The provincial police commissioner, Chris Serfontein, said police were offering a reward of 250,000 rand (£42,000). Mr Mandela said at one of his

The rebels have appeared recently in new battle uniform and carrying heavy weapons which Uganda says are provided by Sudan. Anti-tank rocket launchers, machine guns and anti-personnel mines captured

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America consumed by The Big Smoke

A thousand people smoking cigars in an unventilated underground ballroom might not be everyone's idea of how to raise funds for cancer research. But this is America.

The venue was a power hotel in downtown Washington. The occasion, billed as "The Big Smoke", was a celebration of opulence masquerading as a charity convention for cigar connoisseurs. The spectacle was the caricature of Washington imagined by Pat Buchanan's pitchfork-wielding class warriors.

Fat cats in double-breasted suits - corporate lobbyists, lawyers, PR consultants and politicians - quaffed cognac, picked at *petits fours*, bantered about weighty affairs of state, puffing - heads held high at jaunty angles - on five-and-a-half-inch, hand-rolled Dominican Mootecristos. But they weren't there just to be seen. They had paid \$150 a head to get in and, this being the US, they had to have something to do. So they shopped.

The room, carpeted and chandeliered, had been converted into a high-fashion market place. Rows of elegantly draped stalls offered a variety of extravagant accessories, from gold watches to leather luggage, to champagne and all shapes and sizes of cigar. Served up as part of the entertainment were a couple of dozen women, trophy babes out of a Mercedes Benz commercial. They posed, wickedly elegant, in stiletto heels, sucking cigars, flicking ash off ample décolletages.

Cigars have become such a fashion craze in America in the last couple of years that demand, according to frustrated salesmen, is far outstripping

The world's most health-conscious nation has taken to cigars, writes John Carlin in Washington

supply. Anybody who wants to be anybody these days must be seen smoking a cigar. New cigar clubs open up and down the US every day. Cigar bars in Washington, New York, Chicago and Miami have waiters on hand specially trained to advise customers on what kind of cigar goes best with what meal.

'It goes with the Ferrari, the Rolex, the beautiful women'

(The general rule is a light cigar with fish, strong with red meat.) The Big Smoke has already acquired the status of a tradition. The inaugural bash was held in New York three years ago. Since then, other big cities have followed suit. The Washington bash was the first of nine events planned this year by the sponsor, *Cigar Aficionado* magazine.

The magazine's publisher, Marvin Shanken, said that when he put out his first issue in the Autumn of 1992 he had hoped for a circulation of maybe 20,000. "It was a labour of love. I expected to lose money. And now look: for our latest issue we've done a print run of 350,000." How did he account for his success, for this sudden fascination with cigars? "Simple," Mr Shanken said. "It's enjoyable. It turns them on. It's a status symbol. Cigars convey an image of tradition, wealth, sophistication, the good life. A

cigar is a quality thing to put in your mouth, like fine wine and good food."

Mr Shanken is the idol of the American cigar industry. Oscar Boruchin, a Cuban-American distributor from Miami, said that without *Cigar Aficionado* the boom would never have happened. "When the magazine

cigars with a sensual mystique. Thus the most recent issue features the results of 100 blind cigar tastings. One cigar has "a rich, earthy [flavour] with a solid core of nuts and spices and a very smooth balance"; another is "complex and medium-bodied", possessing "hints of chocolate" and "flavours of dried orange peel"; yet another is "toasty" with "some leather and floral notes".

Lost among these rhapsodies is any sense that cigar-smoking might speed one towards an early death. Mr Boruchin and other cigar merchants at the Washington fair were adamant that the health risks were minimal. "Unlike cigarettes, cigars are not habit-forming; you don't inhale; you smoke them in moderation." Maybe, but all those of us who attended the Big Smoke might make an interesting case study on the effects of passive smoking.

So how to reconcile Americans' obsessiveness with health with the cult of the cigar? Until a cancer cure is found, Big Smoke promises to be as lucrative for the medical profession as for the cigar industry. A doctor present as a non-smoking observer at the cigar-fest, asked for his opinion, replied with a smile and a shrug: "It's good for business."



Crowds gather to watch the undulating serpent of light that appears on the north (left) side of the Mayan pyramid of El Castillo, in Chichén Itzá, Yucatán, Mexico. The phenomenon marks the spring equinox and is held to represent the Mayan god Kukulkam ('Feathered Serpent') descending to earth. Photograph: Heriberto Rodriguez/Reuters

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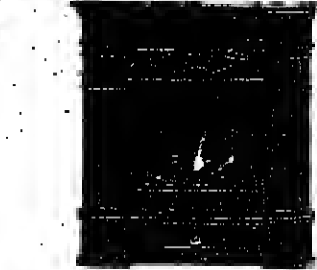
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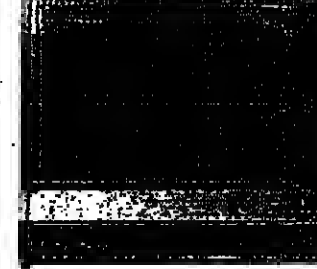
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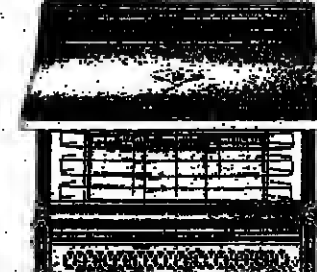
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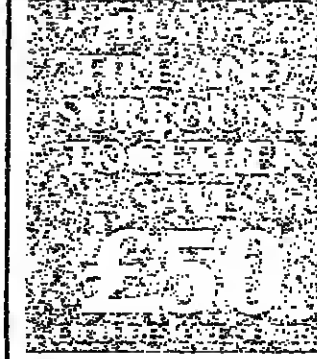
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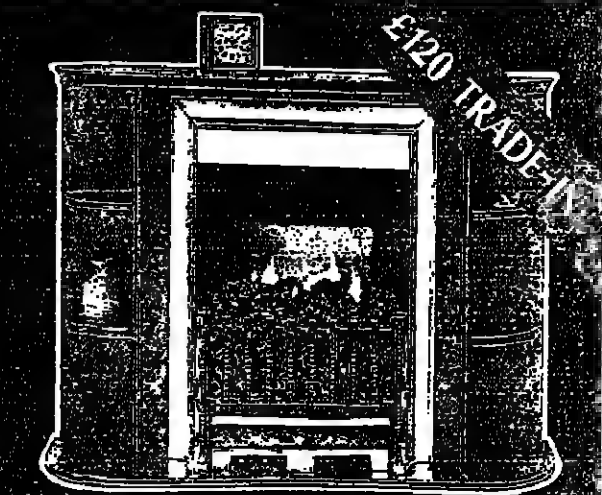
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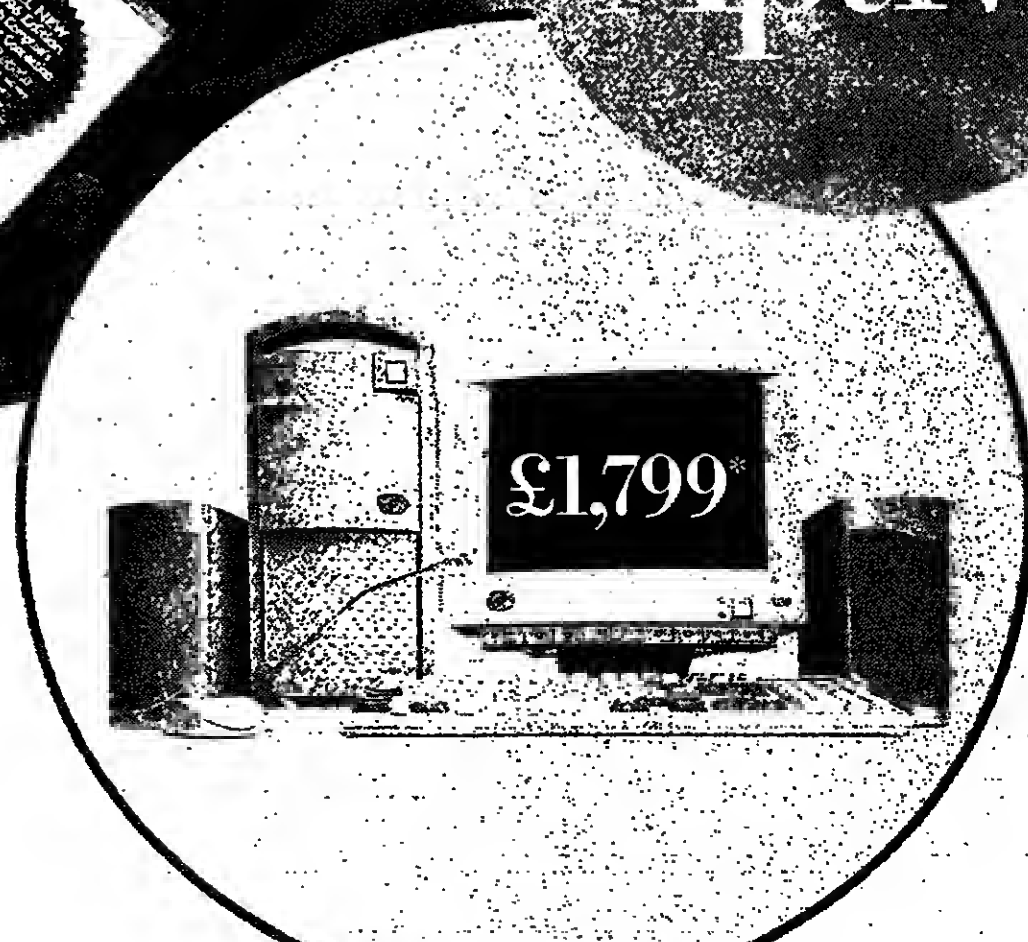
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saturday story



**Rob Will,
CJD Surveillance
Unit**

"My opinion has evolved enormously in two to three weeks"



**John Pattison,
BSE advisory
committee**

"It could be tens of thousands of cases and cumulatively it could be hundreds of thousands"



**Kenneth Calman,
Chief Medical
Officer**

Told Dorrell the grim news before going off to be knighted by the Queen

A discovery by a Scots doctor three weeks ago has set off one of the worst health crises this country has faced. An *Independent* investigation reveals how the nation's BSE nightmare came true

Beefgate

This is the week a conscientious Calvinist Scots doctor destroyed the British beef industry.

Dr Rob Will has made the scientific study of Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD) his life's work. Since its inception in 1990, he has headed the Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease surveillance unit. It compiles detailed information on everyone in Britain who might have been suffering from CJD, to check for a link with "mad cow disease".

Three weeks ago he believed BSE presented "a remote theoretical risk" to people. Now he has changed his mind: as a result the beef industry faces ruin.

It was in the middle of February that Dr Will began to have suspicions that his earlier judgement was wrong. "It's not a flash of light. You build up evidence and then you reach a critical point where you say 'This is convincing'. My opinion has evolved enormously in the past two to three weeks," he explained.

On 8 December last year, in a long article in this newspaper, he wrote: "I do not believe it is reasonable to conclude that there is a significant risk from eating beef". This weekend he reflected: "I was unaware when I wrote the article of the 10 new patients with a new form of CJD for which it is only logical to consider a possible link with BSE. The evidence is really that recent."

Some of the patients with this distinctive, aggressive form of CJD are still alive. The majority of those who have died did so in the early months of this year, although there was one early case in 1994. When the cases emerged three things alerted Dr Will and his colleagues at the CJD unit at the Western General Hospital in Edinburgh. First, the cases were among relatively young people; most victims of CJD are old. Second, their brain tissue displayed a distinctive disease pattern closer to the damage inflicted on a cow's brain by BSE than the damage normal CJD inflicts on humans. Third, these cases took 13 months to die rather than the normal six.

Dr Will's team set about their painstaking analysis. "We need full neuropathological information and genotype analysis. Post-mortems take a long time," Dr Will said. That was not enough, however. To rule out a genetic link or the possibility that the disease was related to the dead person's lifestyle, members of the unit travelled the country in the early weeks of the year to interview still grief-stricken relatives.

So it was that after an intense burst of scientific inquiry in February Dr Will and his colleague Dr James Ironside, who had conducted the pathological examinations of the brain tissue, decided they had to present their evidence to the Government's



A rare mess: the country's £500m beef export industry is at stake, but this is 'one of the most difficult health issues we have ever faced'

Philip Meech

Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee on Friday 8 March.

The 13-strong committee normally meets at a weekend, because its members, the country's leading experts in BSE and CJD, have busy research and clinical schedules. A senior member of the committee recalls that it met in sombre mood. "Ironside and Will said that at first they had thought the cases were linked only because the victims were young. But they checked with other cases involving young people abroad. They found nothing similar in the pathologies so they had to decide it was something new. Everyone around the table feared that it was related to BSE."

"We were all a bit glum. I mean, it had a frightening impact. But standing aside from that, it was a beautiful piece of work getting the full analysis in such a short time."

They have worked very hard."

It was after this meeting that Whitehall's nightmare began. Professor Sir John Pattison, the SEAC chairman, alerted Sir Kenneth Calman, the Chief Medical Officer who tipped off his boss Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary. Pattison's team were told to reconvene the following Saturday, 16 March, to draw up recommendations about what should be done.

A committee member remembered that tense meeting: "We did consider requesting the destruction of the entire national herd. We considered the full spectrum of responses, including saying that the measures then in place were sufficient too. But we felt that there was a need to do more."

It also explored the possibility that BSE might have been passed to other farm animals and whether it might be passed from

them to people. On Monday Calman met Dorrell to tell him the grim news that the preliminary findings had been confirmed: a new strain of CJD had been found and the most likely explanation was BSE.

Dorrell could have pressed the panic button but one of those close to him explained: "He's a pretty cool guy; and he reacted coolly. He knows there is a fine line between openness and panic. But he wanted it out in the open as soon as possible."

As a precaution, his press office had ordered the Department of Health's advertising agency, Ogilvy and Mather, to book space for an announcement in the morning newspapers on Thursday, to calm fears. There would also be a help line to stop the public panicking the Government's switchboards.

On Tuesday, Ogilvy and Mather executives came into the department to meet the head of the press office, Romilla Christopherson, at one time deputy to Bernard Ingham at Number Ten when Margaret Thatcher was in office.

It was the call to Ogilvy and Mather that led to the first leak of the story which appeared in *Campaign*, the advertising industry trade magazine. Its issue published at the start of the week said the agency had been called in to do an emergency campaign to calm public fears about "mad cow disease" after a Dorrell announcement.

As the Ogilvy and Mather team were closeted with Christopherson, SEAC had reconvened elsewhere in the Health Department's offices in Whitehall. Some of its members were in Paris; an open telephone line was set up for them to participate in the discussion.

By a strange coincidence, Calman was also due to visit Buckingham Palace to be knighted by the Queen. The Chief Medical Officer briefed Dorrell in his private office wearing a morning suit before rushing to the Palace. He made it with minutes to spare. The Prime Minister was briefed by Dorrell and Douglas Hogg, the agriculture minister, in the course of the day. They agreed that they had to make a public statement the following day.

SEAC's debate went on till midnight. They finalised their recommendations early on Wednesday morning. The exhausted committee members decided to recommend that carcasses from cattle aged over 20 months should be deboned in specially licensed and supervised plants, that trimmings be kept out of the food chain; and that the use of meat and bone-meat from any mammals be banned from feed for any farm animals – a measure to stop BSE spreading to pigs or chickens.

But as the committee was at work, so was the *Daily Mirror*, where a diligent journalist had picked up the *Campaign* story. The *Daily Mirror* splashed it across its front page on Wednesday morning as Dorrell prepared to brief a cabinet meeting called to discuss the strategy.

Ministers spent an hour discussing the findings and the planned advertising campaign, which was to carry an assurance from the Chief Medical Officer that he would still eat beef as part of a balanced diet. They ordered it to be dropped. "The ads were killed five minutes before the button was pressed," said an advertising source.

Dorrell went on to make his fateful statement to the Commons, before going on to address a hastily arranged press conference. He was sombre, almost contrite. But the nightmare is not over. SEAC had not been able to give him a clear view on whether children could be at higher risk of contracting the new strain. So this weekend the SEAC team will meet again and Dorrell has another statement to make on Monday to the House. It could be one of the worst moments a health secretary has had to face since the Thalidomide scandal.

An SEAC member explained: "One of the senior people we presented the findings to said it's one of the most difficult health issues this country has ever faced. I think we'll probably know in the next six to 12 months if we don't see too many new cases then it could be all right. When I look at the papers I feel 'My God, we've cost the country a £500m export industry'. I just wish I could crawl into a hole. But we're charged with making the decisions, and so we will."

Jo Brand's week



This week is the 50th anniversary of Mind, the mental health charity, and recent research conducted by Mind itself shows that the number of people using mental health services is rising fairly rapidly. Mind has made a great contribution to easing the stigma felt by people who have mental health problems. The days are gone when you could pay your money and take a walk round your local asylum to have a look at all the mad people, but attitudes haven't changed that much. The general public still see those with mental health problems as dangerous objects, instead of people.

In my experience, most of those who are ill, even if they have a debilitating illness, have a wonderful logic to what they do. I remember a friend of mine, who was also a psychiatric nurse, telling me about a man she knew who had suffered from chronic schizophrenia, coming out of hospital and getting a job as a postman. He was a little nervous on his first day but determined to do the job. He picked up his sack of mail, went to the nearest postbox and showed the whole lot in. He then went home and watched telly. Now that's what I call sensible.

The never-ending saga of poor old Florence Nightingale continues. Not only did none of the soldiers under her care want her to be in Scutari, but it now seems she knocked back some bromide, which is a drug given to soldiers to curb their sexual appetite. After taking the drug, she reports, she was so tired, she couldn't do anything. Well, at least we know it works. Perhaps we should start doling it out to men at work and give some women a break from the modern plague of office sexual harassers.

Poor old Frank Bruno. I have to confess I did stay up and watch the terrible battering that he got from Mike Tyson last week. All that completely over-the-top build-up for such a quick end. Mr Tyson seems somewhat confused at the moment. He has converted to Islam and yet he sports a huge tattoo of Mao Tse-tung on his arm, a man who certainly never supported religion of any kind. Still, all these things pale into insignificance, I suppose, when you are faced with the cannon ball that is Mike Tyson's fist. If that fight wasn't an advertisement for stopping people battering each other's brains into tomorrow, I don't know what was.

Apparently, four out of five people in this country can't understand the labels on bottles of suntan lotion. I find that difficult to believe. They're hardly on the level of Einstein's Theory of Relativity, are they? It's easier to believe that people choose to ignore them. After all, mad dogs and Englishmen and all that. What a great summer it's going to be this year. Thousands of roasting sunbathers, a third of whom are



Mad dogs: no notion of lotion

facing a drought as it is, because of the negligence of the privatised water authorities. I wouldn't be surprised if a plague of locusts finishes us all off.

Bosses in the supplies division of the NHS must be very pleased they are going to get whacking great payoffs when their jobs are axed, as yet another reorganisation goes ahead. I'm sure if someone had time to sit down and actually work out the amount of money that has been wasted in these constant reorganisations in the administration of the NHS, it would amount to a staggering sum. It would also be easier to swallow if anyone felt that the executives at the top of the NHS were actually doing a good job – but they're not. The experience of most people is that the whole service is falling apart because the goodwill of nurses and doctors has been exploited beyond belief. As a spokesman said, "There are always costs when you shed jobs." Yes, mate, but the costs are being carried by the people that can least afford it... ordinary people who deserve decent healthcare and not the shambles we've got at the moment.

And if a plague of locusts doesn't finish us all off, tuberculosis may well do. This disease, which a lot of us associate with a swooning Emily Brontë or Dickensian slums, is making a big come-back. It's mainly a

disease associated with poverty and demonstrates the gap that is opening up between the rich and poor. Certain new strains of TB are resistant to current antibiotics, so perhaps money needs to be put into research to stamp it out once and for all. That's if there's any money left after the NHS bosses have grabbed it.

So there's now a Supermodel Sindy range. Must rush out and buy one. Apparently there have been problems in the design of the dolls, particularly as far as Naomi Campbell is concerned. She sent one prototype back because the head was too big. (Are you sure?). How nice for little girls to have yet another set of dolls whose measurements most of them will never be able to live up to. Claudia Schiffer didn't like the colour of the hair on hers, but seems perfectly happy to accept the fact that it's got a ridiculous, famous expression on its face. These dolls are plastic and empty headed and have nothing to say for themselves. Not so different from the real thing, then.



Naomi: never a doll moment

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Vermeer's frozen time draws pilgrims

Andrew Marr explains why Britons are journeying to an exhibition in the Hague

This wintry spring, Holland has been a place of pilgrimage. Some 20,000 British, as well as 100,000 French, 40,000 Belgians and very many others have trekked to a small, cramped art gallery in the Hague. There, crammed together, they have passed by 22 smallish paintings, mostly of mundane domestic scenes, made more than three centuries ago by a man of whom we know little. Why? Because many, the lucky people, will experience something extraordinary, something they will never forget.

Vermeer is beyond explanation. Like all the great artists, what he did escapes words. There are very few Vermeers in the world. Of the 35 known, here are 22. The last time a similar number of Vermeers were gathered together was in May 1996 at a public auction in Amsterdam. The like of this exhibition may not be seen again for another 300 years.

Then there is the technical explanation, the description of Vermeer's daring techniques: his use of the camera obscura, and pins with threads to produce perfect perspective; the delicate washes and radical mixes of paint with grit to produce different surfaces; the complex and intellectual attitude to lighting. Vermeer is a risk-taking experimenter to delight in. He can use dribbles of pure colour (the scarlet lace in *The Lacemaker*) in a way that reminds one of Van Gogh or Jackson Pollock. His flicks of highlight on lips or rich Turkish carpets are as flashily brilliant as anything in Monet. His later short-hand treatment of cloth, dividing it into blocks of tumbling fabric, is positively Cubist. There is hardly a painting there which doesn't at this technical level provide shocks and gasps of delight.

Yet, just as the size of the exhibition is really a curatorial curiosity, so the technical descriptions of Vermeer are only a start. The point of the pilgrimage is the search for something that comes close to spiritual revelation. What Vermeer did, with paint, was to halt time. Watching his silent women by windows, pouring milk, reading letters or examining pearls, is like seeing moments of ordinary life seized, held fast and broken open, revealing some inexpressible mystery.

Sometimes the mystery is utterly sad, sometimes exhilarating. There is a painting from Brunswick of a drunk, leering woman being seduced - *The Girl with the Wine Glass*. It is a mundane enough scene. But stand in front of it and really look and it becomes a despairing image of vanity, a human moment stripped unbearably bare. In an entirely different mood is *Girl with the Red Hat*, a tiny thing, a luscious, dazzling moment of pure lust.

Then there's the famous *View of Delft*, which is a terrifying picture. The town is picked out in hyper-realist detail while above and below the clouds and shadows pour out of the frame toward the viewer. Change seethes around Vermeer's home town in a meditation about transience and extinction which cannot be properly described.

In Proust's *Remembrance of Time's Past*, the writer Bergotte goes to a Parisian exhibition where, standing before this very painting, he is driven into a mystical crisis and deep despair while staring at a patch of yellow wall. "In a celestial pair of scales, there appeared to him, weighing down one of the pans, his own life, while the other contained the little patch of wall so beautifully painted in yellow. He felt that he had rashly sacrificed the former for the latter," Bergotte, the atheist author, then dies. Well, the painting is still there and the wall is still yellow and the landscape is as awe-inspiring as ever.

Proust, who loved Vermeer, is the writer who comes nearest to his genius and to explaining the pilgrimage. He too was obsessed by the possibility of staring into unimportant-seeming moments of life with a gaze of such intensity that one breaks through into a different moment. The French writer and the Dutch painter were both working on the edge where artistic technique meets mystical experience. If music is time decorated, they were masters of time frozen. And that, in the end, is why so many people have been drawn to Holland.

Despair is in contrast with luscious moments of pure lust

Vermeer is beyond explanation. Like all the great artists, what he did escapes words. There are very few Vermeers in the world. Of the 35 known, here are 22. The last time a similar number of Vermeers were gathered together was in May 1996 at a public auction in Amsterdam. The like of this exhibition may not be seen again for another 300 years.

PROFILE: Stephen Dorrell

The BSE crisis has placed the Health Secretary centre stage. Mary Braid wonders if he will cope

Cushioned for months by the simple fact that he was not Virginia, Stephen Dorrell's lengthy honeymoon as Secretary of State for Health came to a dramatic, abrupt end this week.

Most people feel a morbid, human fascination with those poleaxed by fate just when everything was going rather swimmingly. There was the clever, confident Mr Dorrell getting on with the business of cleaning up after his unpopular predecessor, Mrs Bottomley - and no doubt occasionally allowing those thrilling predictions of future Tory leadership to flit naughtily through his mind - when mad cow disease (BSE) creeps up and taps him on the shoulder.

The announcement that there may, after all, be a link between BSE in animals and Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD) in humans - and speculation that it may claim as many as 500,000 lives - has scared the public. It has also shaken Mr Dorrell's political ambitions. In a relatively trouble-free ministerial career, he has never before faced a crisis on this scale. The next few weeks will be crucial for a man, who in 1994 was known to only 4 per cent of voters, but is now tipped for Number 10.

Of course there have been political difficulties before for the member for Loughborough, who gave up a career in his father's industrial overall business to become an MP in 1979. (His 20 per cent shareholding in the family business and his wife, Annette's place on the board ensures an interest and income outside parliament.) First Mr Dorrell, at 27 the youngest of the 1979 intake, languished on the backbenches. Mentored by David Hunt, the former Welsh secretary, he was, both by association and in his own social policy ideas, too damp for Mrs Thatcher's liking.

But after becoming a junior health minister in 1990 he moved swiftly on and up to become Financial Secretary to the Treasury and then Secretary of State for National Heritage. There was that embarrassing occasion when Mr Dorrell revealed that he thought that Jeanne Moreau, the French actress, was a man. Some found it hard to forgive in a national heritage secretary who had already confessed he could not remember the last film he saw. His detractors sniffed that



Stephen Who? 'He hasn't got a big personality and that is a problem'

Tony Buckingham

Enter the invisible man

he was just too middle-market and middlebrow bourgeois for the job.

But these are mere ripples compared to the current storm. The question is, can Mr Dorrell retain his legendary cool? His unflappable - and dry sense of humour - was clearly demonstrated when his mother was recently splashed across the front of the local paper

quirming all week. He has refused to give a direct answer.

He gave an uncharacteristically poor Commons performance when he made his statement on BSE. "Once he started reading he didn't lift his head once," said one commentator. "He totally failed to see the human dimension. He forgot to say he realised that people would

low-key style. Until recently, Mr Dorrell regularly loop-the-looped in the skies over his Worcester home in his beloved Tiger Moth. But his devil side is an aberration: frequent comparisons of the minister to the clean-cut models that adorn Fifties knitting patterns are more in keeping with his personal style and political approach.

Mr Dorrell would balk at the notion of a Gummer-style photo opportunity involving his children. And the rather grave Mr Dorrell would have frowned had he inherited "Minister for Fun", the nickname given to David Mellor, his predecessor at heritage. If anything characterises Mr Dorrell it is, they say, "caution".

Even Stephen Dorrell's critics say he is "awesomely talented". Civil servants are full of praise for his command of his brief, management skills, courtesy and his loyalty. One political commentator recalls Mr Dorrell's "impressive" return to the Department of Health last year. "Within a week he found himself in front of a health select committee. He had the standard ministerial brief in front of him but never had to open it once." However, Mr Dorrell shares John Major's "greyness".

"There is a touch of the civil servant in him. He hasn't got a big personality and that is a problem," says one political adviser. "Like Kenneth Clarke, he is a confident performer. Both men stand out in the political arena because they will concede points but go on to fight their corner. But Stephen Dorrell is Clarke without the high wire. He is safer, less exciting and less glamorous."

Mr Dorrell claims to enjoy being grilled by Jeremy Paxman. "He is an ideas politician," says one commentator. "He is there because he is interested in politics, not because of his ego. And he sees politics with an outsider's eye. He likes to talk to journalists to sharpen his arguments."

Others do not dismiss him so readily. Chris Han, health economist and adviser to Dorrell, says that everything depends on how he handles his greatest crisis. What is certain is that Mr Dorrell, until recently virtually unknown, will never again be seen as the Cabinet's invisible man. BSE will make him or break him.

Even Stephen Dorrell's critics say that he is 'awesomely talented'

objecting to the closure of an old folks home in which his father had died. Confronted by the picture of mum and her spaniel, he reportedly said: "Oh well, at least it is a nice picture of the dog."

Mrs Dorrell's latest media encounter may prove more testing. She revealed in the *Daily Mirror* yesterday that Mr Dorrell does not eat burgers and nor do his two young children. The question of whether he would feed beef to his own children has had Mr Dorrell

be anxious; that the news was worrying. He was clearly worried about how this would look in five or 10 years' time. He is a very ambitious man and he wants to cover and distance himself. His later statement that he didn't have a scientific opinion worth listening to on the subject was quite bizarre. It was a remarkable abdication of responsibility for a minister."

But admirers see the week's performance as a reflection of his preference for understatement and his

When believers desert their church

Methodism, facing extinction, must learn the importance of not being earnest, says Andrew Brown

In a competitive world, it can seem unusually Christian of the Methodist Church to announce that it is dying; but dying, in an alarmingly literal sense, is what last week's membership figures mean. The church is losing members at a rate of 2.5 per cent a year; if these trends persist, it will have vanished altogether by the middle of the next century.

The problem for the church is not that its members are losing faith: the number who left over the past three years is only 2,000 greater than the number who joined. No, the members the Methodists are really missing will now find their faith is stronger than ever; unfortunately, that is because they are dead. More than 30,000 Methodists have died in the past three years, and their younger replacements are nowhere to be seen. Church membership under the age of 26 has fallen by a fifth in three years. It is possible to be precise about these figures because membership of the Methodists is by subscription. Their churches do not have the large, half-believing penumbra that surrounds Anglican or Roman Catholic membership figures.

Of course, the release of this week's figures was not meant as an invitation to other denominations to start stripping the remaining assets of Methodism. It was meant, in the words of one insider, "to give the church a fright", so that its members would do something about the problem. Extinction for the Methodists had been confidently prophesied in the Fifties and averted, so why should the threat be real this time?

The answer is a profoundly gloomy one, with implications for all the mainstream denominations in Britain. Methodism, it would appear, is dying out because it is boring. Unfortunately, it is no longer boring in ways that Methodists can be proud of. Boringness used to be one of the great strengths of Methodism. It started as a frighteningly exciting mass-movement of the poor and dispossessed, but, within a generation, the poor who became Methodists stopped being so poor. They became sober, industrious, trustworthy, and so, by degree, respectable, often with the fierce, self-righteous respectability of those who know that an abyss of poverty and shame lies close beneath them. It is a process that continues to this day as protestantism advances in Latin America and Eastern Europe.

In England, it produced a serious, instantly recognisable, deeply rooted class of meritocrats,

excluded perhaps from the higher reaches of the establishment, but hugely important in the provinces. Mrs Thatcher was brought up a Methodist. The people some of us came to London to escape were Methodists.

In other words, they might be boring, but they mattered. Methodism had become the natural expression of the spiritual dimension of a distinct and recognisable class. What made it boring or repellent to so many people was solidity, not rapidity. And the other large Christian denominations were also embedded in a recognisable matrix. Irish working-class Catholics or Anglican old maids cycling to communion down misty country lanes both represented religions tightly established in particular social and economic roles.

This was enormously important because reli-

gions only exceptionally spread by force of argument, or by conversion. Their most effective means of transmission is by osmosis. It is a great mistake of modern secular talk to assume that religions are primarily about belief, when they are actually about practice and ritual. You are not converted to a faith - you grow up in it, without noticing that this is happening.

So religions that established themselves and put down roots in particular parts of society are very vulnerable to social change. Whether "family values" are integral to Christianity (and Jesus himself said some fierce things against families), they are certainly helpful for its transmission. The precipitous decline of the Roman Catholic church in this country is largely a function of its conversion from a working-class

religion to a middle-class one, with smaller, less stable families. However, Catholicism has a solid core of doctrine that makes it attractive to intellectual converts. Though there still are distinctive and shrewd Methodist intellectuals, it is not a system of thought. When Mrs Thatcher made the shift from attending a Methodist chapel to an Anglican church, this was a social move, not a doctrinal one.

One Anglican priest who, like Mrs Thatcher, was a Methodist until he arrived at Oxford, said that he had left because of "the frightful incoherence of Methodist doctrine. I suddenly realised it was possible to be a Christian without being earnest." This was hardly a doctrinal shift. However, it does suggest ways in which the virtues that act as ropes and pitons to hold you above the abyss of poverty and shame can come to seem cramping when the abyss recedes.

This is all part of a wider pattern. The United Reformed Church, itself formed from a merger of smaller congregationalist bodies, is shrinking almost as fast as the Methodists, and hopes for salvation by union with them. The Methodists, in turn, seem to have no real long-term strategy beyond union with the Church of England - but that body, too, is facing similar problems and for similar reasons. In all these churches, there are success stories, but these are local, and decentralised. People do join, even if fewer join than leave and die; and techniques for attracting new members are being developed.

In America, of course, churches have gained strength from social disruption by becoming social centres themselves. Some churches are doing that in this country now. The most successful modern evangelical technique is the Alpha course, developed at Holy Trinity Brompton, an enormously rich Anglican church in central London, whose methods have been widely adopted elsewhere.

Alpha is a course for modern, mobile and rootless people. It is taken in groups over a 10-week period, and includes a residential weekend. To outsiders, it can look like brainwashing: it is certainly as much an introduction to *belonging* among Christians as it is to holding particular beliefs. But if the decline of Methodism lends itself to any moral, this is surely that churches are more vigorous when they are frightening than when boring.



John Wesley, founder of Methodism, on his death-bed

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obituaries / gazette

Alan Ridout

Alan Ridout could have succeeded in almost any walk of life. His outstanding intellectual ability coupled with enviable self-discipline would have ensured a rise to the height of any profession he chose, but from an early age there was no question in his mind but that his life should be devoted to music.

Before he knew that such a thing as composing existed he heard music in his head, and by the age of 12 had written over 100 works. His mother was a vital force in his musical education (and in his life) and it was she who, in the face of fierce opposition from his father, headed the advice of musical friends and arranged for him to have piano lessons when he was nine years old. By the age of 12 he had reached Grade Eight in the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music examination which he passed with distinction, and at 15 he was allowed to leave Haberdashers' Aske's School, then in Hampstead, and study music full-time at the Guildhall School of Music. In his autobiography, *A Composer's Life* (1965), he refers to this as the happiest day of his life, for he had known from early childhood that all he wanted to do was write music.

The Guildhall syllabus opened up a new world to the young musician. However, he was disappointed with the composition lessons and in desperation sent a set of variations for piano and string orchestra to Benjamin Britten with an appeal for help. The reply was encouraging, and taking the advice (at 15 one can learn something from everyone) to learn Ridout spent nearly two years at the Guildhall. (Many years later he was to write a piece for Peter Pears in which Gerald Moore accompanied him.)

In 1951 he was offered a place at the Royal College of Music. Here he studied piano with Thornton Lofthouse and composition with Gordon Jacob, a teacher for whom he had tremendous respect, and Herbert Howells, whose music meant much to Ridout in later life. Before leaving the college he took extramural lessons in composition from Peter Racine Tricker and while teaching near Tunbridge Wells, through a



Ridout drawn by Joy Finzi

chance conversation with his father, he met Sir Michael Tippett, under whom he also studied. In 1958 a Netherlands Government Scholarship gave him the opportunity to study with the composer Henk Badings, who introduced him to the electronic techniques of composing as well as a wide variety of contemporary European music.

He claimed that, out of all his teachers, he had learned most from Badings. When he left the Royal College at the age of 20 the problem of making a living and leaving time for composition was solved by his taking up the post of Director of Music at a preparatory school in Kent; teaching was to form an important part of Alan Ridout's career for the next 35 years.

By 1964 he was Professor of Theory and Composition at the Royal College of Music and teaching at Cambridge, Birmingham and London Universities. He became friends with Howard Ferguson, the composer, pianist, and scholar, through whom he met Ursula Vaughan Williams. Friendships such as these, which lasted for the rest of Ridout's life, were important to him on both intellectual and social levels.

In the 1960s he broadcast two substantial series on musical education for the BBC, but did not enjoy the experience and found that with the teaching that he had already committed to he had little more than a few hours a week left for composing.

In 1964 Alan Wicks, then organist and master of the Choirs at Canterbury Cathedral, commissioned Ridout to write a piece for the cathedral choir. Out of this commission came a collaboration, founded on mutual admiration, that blossomed into a period of intense creativity centred around the cathedral choir, choral society and the organ. At the suggestion of the Rev David Marriott, then headmaster of the choir school, Ridout was asked to give composition lessons to the choristers. In the early 1970s, after the closure of the choir school (to which he was vehemently opposed), Ridout joined the music staff at the King's School, Canterbury, where he had amongst his colleagues Edred Wright, Col Paul Neville and Barry Rose. His genius for inspiring and nurturing talent will never be forgotten by those who were lucky enough to be his students.

Ridout was an immensely prolific composer and a complete list of his works soon to be published will run to nearly a hundred pages. Commissions were many and varied. For David Willocks and the Cambridge University Music Society, a wind symphony (*The Adoration of the Magi*); for the BBC, an opera based on the Icarus legend; for Kent Opera *The Pardoner's Tale* and a children's opera, *Angelo*; and in 1965, the music for the Royal Maundy Service at Canterbury.

Ridout enjoyed collaborating with individual instrumentalists and his associations with Paul Davis and James Bowman were especially fruitful. He met Bowman in 1970 and his extraordinary voice inspired many important works including a setting for countertenor solo, chorus and wind of Wilde's *Ballad of Reading Gaol*.

Ridout's fluency led to a vast number of concertos for solo instruments with piano or string accompaniment often written especially for students or friends. He wrote for performance and his works gave as much joy to those who performed them as to those who listened: it is not insignificant that he is familiar as a composer to many amateur musicians throughout the country.

Joy and humour pervaded so much that he wrote and it is fitting that his last major work, commissioned by the Three Choirs Festival and performed at Hereford in 1994 and again at York Minster only a few months ago, should have been *A Canticle of Joy*, a deeply moving consummation of his life's work.

Alan Ridout's effervescent and spontaneous humour was irresistible and he was unceasingly kind and generous to his friends and to other composers and artists. He was like the best parts of each member of one's family rolled into one; having the wisdom and authority of a father, the love and encouragement of a mother and the closeness of a brother. He was observant of life's problems but never intrusive; his help, advice and support knew no bounds. His understanding of human nature gave him the insight to know when he was most needed and the clarity and soundness of his advice grew out of a life of intense observation which began in his earliest childhood.

His passions in life spread beyond music to art, architecture, food, and, in later life, travel and in all of these his taste was totally individual and often unconventional, being guided by a profound knowledge of his subject and a confident instinct that was invariably right and always refreshing. (Except perhaps in food, where his tastes erred towards the bizarre. He found Mars Bars irresistible and would consume quantities of them throughout a day. I was with him in France recently and before catching my boat we looked for a restaurant for lunch. Surrounded by the best that Brittany could offer he chose a Chinese establishment and we ate food that could have been found in any high street in England. Perhaps he was homesick.)

He opened people's eyes to aspects of their chosen subject that they had passed over and often drew one's attention to something that had suffered at the hands of the popularists. His great sadness at the death of Leonard Bernstein stemmed from an admiration for a musical polymath whose career had encompassed every aspect, resulting in his dismissal by some as being no more than a showman. Ridout had no time

for pomposity or snobishness in any walk of life.

He had a profound but original faith and was deeply religious; his conversion to Catholicism in 1994 seemed a logical progression for him. Whilst staying with his publisher, June Emerson, in Ampleforth, he felt a magnetism towards the Roman Catholic Community at Ampleforth Abbey and it was there that he was received into the Roman Catholic Church, being made an oblate of the order of St Benedict soon afterwards.

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maintained a conservative attitude to new medical treatments for his patients at Bristol, preferring a method to be thoroughly tried and tested before he would agree to put it into practice.

He was also concerned with the success of the university as a whole, and not just that of the medical school. He served as Pro-Vice-Chancellor from 1958 to 1961, and was made an Honorary Fellow in 1986. He was involved in the building of the student union in 1965, the maintenance of an excellent student health service and the rebuilding and expansion of the medical school in 1960.

His patients, particularly children, loved him — they quickly saw through his abrupt manner and realised he had an inner kindness. His students respected him as a brilliant lecturer and bedside teacher, though they feared him as an examiner. His professional colleagues admired him, although

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Claude Bourdet

On 31 March 1956 French security police came to arrest Claude Bourdet.

He was taken first to the prison of La Santé, then to Fresnes. He was finally taken to some barracks where a magistrate prepared to examine him. "It's curious," Bourdet remarked, "but it's exactly the same as last time. First to Santé, then Fresnes. You've followed the same route as the others." "What do you mean, the others?" asked the magistrate, frowning. "Why, the Gestapo, of course

Figures at close of business 21/3/06

Foreign Exchange Rates

Sterling		Exchange rates			Dollar		D-Mark		
Country	Spot	1 month	3 months		Spot	1 month	3 months		Spot
United States	15373	8-6	25-22	1000	—	—	—	—	057
Canada	23034	1-3	50-47	1287	8-1	2-1	—	—	092
France	2269	4-5	57-57	1363	26-34	—	78-75	—	100
Germany	77807	51-11	369	50-50	59-53	—	166-148	—	570
Italy	28955	75-78	227-246	325-59	57-64	—	170-172	—	72-83
Japan	10330	14-76	235-226	55-54	45-44	—	136-133	—	74-83
ECU	12299	5-11	45-49	12061	7-8	—	23-25	—	2034
Sweden	4669	12-9	34-35	3256	5-8-18	—	172-147	—	0539
Denmark	23791	103-95	411-377	57000	60-60	—	195-129	—	389
Netherlands	25328	9-10	35-36	15766	32-39	—	96-95	—	108
Ireland	9579	4-5	25-20	10278	6-5	—	6-11	—	10
Spain	85642	14-16	329-233	6499	42-47	—	110-60	—	64048
Portugal	19076	9-94	17-19	2304	32-36	—	57-05	—	3545
Greece	10235	9-5	23-24	19843	37-43	—	260-270	—	4508
Switzerland	13671	20-20	250-88	11960	98-124	—	111-05	—	0805
Australia	10761	20-31	—	—	—	—	—	—	54-56
Hong Kong	11888	100-01	224-170	27535	2-12	—	50-50	—	1273
Malaysia	31925	0-0	0-0	22450	4-4	—	—	—	5223
New Zealand	22366	43-57	135-156	14148	30-32	—	88-88	—	0955
Saudi Arabia	5759	—	—	17424	2-7	—	—	—	2540
Singapore	21264	0-0	0-0	15755	40-40	—	103-98	—	0955

Other Spot Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Algeria	15378	10000	Nigeria	130,252	84,7000
Australia	59,681	93,382	Oman	0,8922	0,3981
Brazil	5,072	0,867	Pakistan	33,026	34,0000
China	12,926	8,338	Philippines	40,321	29,2200
Egypt	5,298	3,4090	Portugal	22,495	162,550
Finland	70,785	4,607	Qatar	5,5970	3,6420
Ghana	2,989,32	5,5550	Russia	74,948	4,85400
Greece	370,218	34,950	South Africa	6,0220	2,9000
India	74,734,23	1,0000	Taiwan	41,957	22,890
Kuwait	0,4600	0,2980	U.A.E.	5,648	3,9720

Forward rates quoted high to low are at a discount: subtract from spot rate
 rate quoted low to high are at a premium: add to spot rate
 *Dollar rates quoted as reciprocals.
 For the latest foreign exchange rates call 0851 123 3033.
 Calls cost 35p per minute plus 10p per connection.

Interest Rates

UK		Germany		US		Japan	
Base	6.00%	Discount	3.00%	Prime	8.75%	Discount	0.50%
France		Lombard	5.00%	Discount	5.00%	Belgian	
Intervention	3.50%	Canada		Fed Funds	5.25%	Discount	3.00%
Italy		Prime	7.00%	Spain		Central	3.30%
Discount	9.00%	Discount	5.50%	10-Day Fedp	8.05%	Switzerland	
Netherlands		Danmark		Sweden		Discount	1.50%
Advances	3.00%	Discount	3.75%	Repo (Avg)	7.60%	Lombard	4.125%

Bond Yields

Country	8yr	yield %	10yr	yield %	Country	8yr	yield %	10yr	yield %
UK	8/00%	7.36	5/1%	8.03	Netherlands	9%	5.22	6%	6.4
US	5 1/8%	5.98	5 1/8%	6.25	Spain	10 1/8%	9.22	10 5/8%	9.8
Japan	6 1/8%	1.97	3 1/8%	3.8	Italy	10 7/8%	10.09	10 7/8%	10.0
Australia	8 1/4%	8.57	10%	8.88	Belgium	7 1/4%	5.82	8 1/8%	8.6
Germany	5 3/8%	5.16	6%	6.46	Sweden	11%	8.01	8%	8.0
France	5 1/8%	6.91	7 1/4%	6.72	ECU OAT	9 1/4%	6.43	7 1/4%	7.2

*Yields calculated on local bonds. †From benchmark.

Money Market Rates

	On Night	7 Day	1 Month	3	6 Months	1 Year
Interbank	4 1/4 - 5 1/4	5 1/4 - 5 1/2	5 3/4 - 6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4	6 1/4 - 6 1/2
Swearing CDE	-	-	6	6	6	6 1/2
Local Authority Deps	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	6	6	6 1/4
Discount Market Deps	5 1/4	5 1/4	-	-	-	-
Treasury Bills (Buy)	-	-	5 1/4	5 1/2	-	-
Dollar CDE	-	-	4 9/16	5 1/4	5 1/2	5 1/4
ECU Linked Dep	-	-	4 1/4 - 4 1/2	4 1/2 - 4 1/4	4 1/2	4 1/4

Tourist Rates

£ Buys		£ Buys		£ Buys	
Australia(Dollars)	19200	France(Francis)	75600	New Zealand(Dollars)	21750
Austria(Schilling)	853400	Germany(Marks)	22600	Norway(Kroner)	98200
Belgium(Francs)	405000	Greece(Drachmas)	3520000	Portugal(Escudos)	2880000
Canada(Dollars)	20400	Hong Kong(Dollars)	116200	Saudi(Pesetas)	1260000
Cyprus(Pounds)	0.9375	Ireland(Punts)	0.9560	Sweden(Kronor)	100400
Denmark(Krone)	83300	Italy(Lira)	224330000	Switzerland(Swiss Francs)	17700
Holland(Guilders)	24900	Japan(Yen)	151000	Turkey(Lira)	999000000
Spain(Pesetas)	1000000	U.S.A.(Dollars)	100000	United States(Dollars)	1000000

Liffe Financial Futures

Contract	Settlement price	High/Low for day	End-Close traded	% Change
Long GE (Mar 99)	106.10	106.55	106.98	227
German bond (Jun 99)	95.30	95.60	95.85	95.92
Long IBM (Mar 99)	103.10	103.40	103.65	103.68
Italian bond (Jun 99)	103.90	103.93	104.72	104.76
3M Stealing (Jun 99)	93.10	93.10	93.55	93.55
3M Euro S (Mar 99)	93.19	93.19	93.61	93.61
3M Euro R (Mar 99)	96.72	96.74	96.71	96.84
Long IBM (Mar 99)	95.82	95.82	96.07	96.06
ECU (Sep 99)	95.42	95.42	95.59	95.52
Long IBM (Sep 99)	95.54	95.56	95.52	95.40
Long S&P (Sep 99)	95.00	95.00	95.00	95.00
FTSE 100 (Jun 99)	3660.0	3670.0	3675.5	3674
FTSE 250 (Jun 99)	4290.0	4290.0	4290.0	4290.0
Long IBM (Jun 99)	90.65	90.61	90.72	90.72

Little FT-SE Index Option

Series	Settlement price: 3895.0	closing offer price		Call/Put Total/y
Apr	132/22	74/57	45/53	23/37
May	132/41	101/56	70/75	47/107
Jun	165/81	123/78	92/87	69/122
Jul	175/88	144/87	114/108	91/134

Energy

Brent Crude FE 5.30pm		(\$/barrel) "chg Yr Ago		Gas Oil (\$/barrel) FE close "chg		WTI \$pm		Products + Spot CF NW Europe		(\$/barrel) "chg Yr Ago					
May	5.80	-0.35	94.56	Apr	16.00	-4.25	May	2.095	Loaded Gasoline	169.25	199.25				
Jun	5.79	-0.34	94.56	May	16.00	-1.75	Jun	1.955	Gas Oil	173.00	199.25				
Jul	5.72	-0.29	94.53	Jun	15.75	-1.25	Jul	1.885	EC Naphtha	199.00	199.25				
Vol: 27,266				Index: 18.47				Vol: 18,150				Index: 1945			
Heavy Fuel Oil				18.47				Heavy Fuel Oil				1945			
Vol: 15,500				Index: 18.47				Vol: 15,500				Index: 18.47			

Commodity Indices

[illegible]

Industrial Metals

	Shares	Cash	3 mths	Volume	LINE Stocks	Chg
Aluminum HG	9443-48	1976-77	96637	724325	+	23
Aluminum Alloy	1380-50	1420-26	1221	76820	+	2
Copper A	2582-64	2659-51	98608	337650	+	23
Lead	825-30	8125-145	1958	86975	+	7
Nickel	5400-10	5480-85	14508	86362	+	7
Tin	6445-35	6475-50	8020	8400	+	1
Zinc	1073-74	1265-37	10462	626750	+	1

Precious Metals

per 100 lbs.	\$	¢	Coina	\$	¢	\$	
Potatun	41.75	23.90	Bohanna	412	288	Krughands	387/400
Potatun	39.00	90.48	Britannia 5 oz.	206	134	Sows	91/95
Silver spoil	8.57	3.62	Britannia 25 oz	103	67	Nobles	403/38
Gold dust	3.95	257.35	Britannia 30 oz	62	34	Maple Leaf	338/412

Agricultural
Cocoa Cotton E

LCE	Sh/tonne	LCE	Sh/tonne	LCE	Sh/tonne	LCE	Sh/tonne	AD	Q4/1999
Mar	870	Mar	2034	Mar	19300	Apr	15630	Apr	251
May	850	May	2006	May	13040	May	16490	May	265
Jul	912	Jul	2030	Sept	10586	Jun	22500	Jun	226
Vol	6,152	Vol	3,398	Vol	24	Vol	70	Vol	1,075
White Sugar		Raw Sugar		Freight		Wheat		Corn	2000
LCE	Sh/tonne	LCE	Cents/kg	LCE	\$/billion	LCE	Sh/tonne	CBOT	Cents/bushel
May	366.0	May	1180	Mar	1446	Mar	11820		154.50
								Mar 2000	25.75

Aug	373.10	Jul	11.90	Apr
Oct	336.60	Oct	11.90	Nov

[illegible]

Trust Prices

Stock	Sell	Buy	Yld	Stock	Sell	Buy	Yld	Stock	Sell	Buy	Yld	Stock	Sell	Buy	Yld	Stock	Sell	Buy	Yld	Stock	Sell	Buy	Yld	Stock	Sell	Buy	Yld	Stock	Sell	Buy	Yld				
AXA Equity & Low Risk Trust Managers Asia Equity & Life Inv. Corporation Ltd. Cityview City 1120				Managed Fund Acc UK Growth Funds Smaller Cos	9661	94.90	2.82	FP Steering Deposit (Accum) Deposits	10.10	10.10	5.26	Cash	93.847	93.847	0.75	European Diversifd	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0001 0001 0001				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0002 0002 0002				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0003 0003 0003				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0004 0004 0004				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0005 0005 0005				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0006 0006 0006				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0007 0007 0007				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0008 0008 0008				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0009 0009 0009				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0010 0010 0010				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0011 0011 0011				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0012 0012 0012				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0013 0013 0013				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0014 0014 0014				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0015 0015 0015				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0016 0016 0016				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0017 0017 0017				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0018 0018 0018				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0019 0019 0019				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0020 0020 0020				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0021 0021 0021				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0022 0022 0022				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0023 0023 0023				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0024 0024 0024				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0025 0025 0025				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0026 0026 0026				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0027 0027 0027				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0028 0028 0028				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0029 0029 0029				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0030 0030 0030				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0031 0031 0031				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0032 0032 0032				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0033 0033 0033				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0034 0034 0034				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0035 0035 0035				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00
0036 0036 0036				Smaller Cos Acc	4766	50.10	1.60	(Accum) Units	10.13	10.13	5.26	UK Bear	93.847	93.847	0.75	(Accum) Units	90.20	94.50	3.01	Inf Emerging Cos Acc	29.28	29.28	0.00	(Accum) Units	90.72	90.72	0.00	Japan	7.57	7.57	0.00	Japan	7.57		



"He wants his children to have a proper holiday, even though he won't be there to see it."

Nursing someone who's going through the final stages of cancer can take more than professional skills. A Marie Curie Nurse could even be asked to help plan a holiday for a patient's young family.

Last year we cared for well over 20,000 cancer patients in their own homes - providing more than one million hours of patient care.

We also have eleven Hospice Centres across the UK, the world renowned Marie Curie Research Institute and education and training in cancer care for doctors, nurses and paramedics.

No charge is ever made to our patients, or their families. We depend heavily on voluntary contributions.

Please help us to continue this vital work.

Hearts & Minds Against Cancer

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محمد اقبال

Oftel turns its fire on BSkyB cable terms

MARY FAGAN
and MATTHEW HORSMAN

Don Cruickshank, the telecoms regulator, is gunning for Rupert Murdoch, in a bid to break the media baron's near monopoly on pay-TV programming. In a 60-page submission to the Office of Fair Trading, which is investigating Mr Murdoch's BSkyB, Mr Cruickshank's OfTel has lashed out at the terms on which the satellite broadcaster makes its pay-TV programmes - including the popular Sky

sport and film channels - available to cable companies. The intervention by OfTel, the telecommunications regulator, will increase tension with the Independent Television Commission, the television watchdog. But OfTel argues that it has a right to be concerned over the future of the cable industry, which is the major competitor to BT in local telephone services. BSkyB currently dictates the terms on which it makes its channels available to the cable industry. Specifically, operators

can only receive significant discounts on programming if they accept "bundles" of channels. The price is fixed as a percentage of the retail price which BSkyB charges its direct-to-home satellite subscribers. OfTel regards both practices as unacceptable and anti-competitive. Mr Cruickshank is thought to be adamant that all BSkyB programming be unbundled, giving cable operators freedom to pick and choose among them. OfTel also calls for non-dis-

criminatory pricing, based on clear, separate accounts for the various parts of BSkyB's businesses. This reflects the approach used by Mr Cruickshank in his dealings with BT. The OfTel submission says that accounting separation is a key safeguard against abuse, and should be a central part of any undertakings. "There are good grounds for considering that [BSkyB's] pricing and other practices are tending to hold back the development of the cable companies and

therefore is threatening the prospects for competition in pay-TV in both the short and the long term." OfTel's chief concern is that this will in turn hold back the cable industry's ability to market its cable services and thereby reduce its attractiveness to potential telephone customers. Cable operators could find themselves "between a rock and a hard place", with Sky on one side and BT on the other. The ITC is believed to be wary of OfTel's intervention, and sees

the submission as an attempt to poach its territory. Under the current regime, the ITC and OfTel are meant to co-operate in key areas, including conditional access, the technical term for the scrambling and unscrambling of TV signals used by pay-TV broadcasters. But it is increasingly obvious that the ITC regards OfTel as a rival rather than a partner in overseeing a rapidly evolving industry, where the old distinctions between broadcasting and telephony are becoming blurred.

Post Office in pensions amnesty

PETER RODGERS
Business Editor

The Post Office has offered 11,000 employees the right to opt back into its pension scheme, in a one-off amnesty for members who quit to take out personal pensions. The offer to non-members, who include some who refused to join the £10.5bn scheme when they arrived at the Post Office, runs to the end of June. Only a handful of public sector employers have made arrangements to readmit pension scheme members who left as a result of the personal pensions mis-selling scandal, which came to light more than two years ago.

Members of schemes such as the mineworkers, the teachers, the nurses and the Post Office were tempted by hard selling to drop the often substantial benefits of their corporate schemes and take up personal pensions that offered less security and lower pensions. The Securities and Investments Board stepped in when the scale of the problem came to light, and pension providers are expected to pay substantial damages to customers who were sold the wrong policies. But so far no cases have reached court and no compensation has been paid.

The Post Office said "the amnesty gives our people a second chance if they feel they made a mistake, perhaps after being targeted by personal pension sales teams. Many responded immediately to our offer and more are following as they calculate the benefits."

Under the rules of the scheme, many of the 11,000 employees are prevented from rejoining by age or time limits, but the Post Office said the present circumstances were unusual.

A survey by the Post Office found that four out of five of its employees who opted out of the scheme did so to take out personal pensions, but the majority regretted it and now wanted to change their minds and get back in.

Two-thirds of those who had never joined the company scheme also wanted a second chance to become members. Although the 11,000 will be able to regain the benefits of the Post Office's generous state sector scheme, they will not be able to replace the benefits lost during their period outside the scheme, except by suing the personal pension providers for compensation.

Among the other state employees hit by the scandal, the Home Office has agreed to amend legislation that prevents the 400 police who left their pension scheme rejoining.

Top jobs controversy: Fresh criticism for Sir Richard Sykes as NatWest banker's rewards overtake his chief executive's

Glaxo chief's pay and bonuses soar to £2.15m

MAGNUS GRIMMOND
and JOHN EISENHAMMER

Glaxo Wellcome's chief executive, Sir Richard Sykes, looks set to spark a new controversy over executive salaries after it emerged that his total emoluments soared to £2.15m in 1995, making him one of the best paid directors in Britain. The news came as it was revealed that Martin Owen, head of NatWest Markets, received a 25 per cent pay rise to £617,000 last year, overtaking his boss, chief executive Derek Wanless.

The payment to Sir Richard covers a year when the giant drugs group announced 7,500 redundancies in the aftermath of its £9.3bn merger with rivals Wellcome. It comes just as senior management are set to move to a new incentive scheme inspired by the Greenbury report last year on executive pay which could net them over £20m in the next three years.

Sir Richard's pay last year compares with a redundancy

payment of less than £60,000 which a 45-year-old worker with 20 years service could have expected to receive after the closure of Wellcome's Beckenham research centre in Kent last year.

Paul Talbot, national officer of the MSF union, which represents workers at Glaxo Wellcome, said: "This is just disgraceful in view of the number of people who have lost their jobs in the last 12 months. That's not justifiable."

Most of recent controversial increases in executive pay were in the privatised utilities. But after a 42 per cent rise this week in the remuneration package of Sir Ronald Hampel, chairman of ICI and of the new corporate governance committee that is to follow up the Greenbury work, there are concerns that the issue of rising pay at the top may spread to other companies this year.

The latest figure for Sir Richard covers the 18 months to the end of December, reflecting a changed year end, but still represents a considerable

increase on the £931,000 he was paid for the 12 months to June 1994, even when account is taken of the extended accounting period. But the company defended the payment yesterday, citing the distortions caused by the changed year end and extra payments made to buy out a former incentive scheme.

A spokesman said: "Our view is that salaries are competitive and appropriate, given the company's size and complexity and its place in the international pharmaceuticals market. The new [incentive] schemes provide demanding targets."

Sir Richard's basic annual salary went up from £700,000 to £800,000 last year, which came out at £1.125m for the 18 months. On top of that, he picked up a performance bonus of £212,000 relating to the 1993-94 financial year, which was paid in the latest period due to the changed year end, and £41,000 in other benefits. He received a further £770,000 to buy out the old incentive scheme, known as



Eye of the storm: Sir Richard Sykes has drawn criticism from unions, who compare his salary with redundancy payments

the performance unit plan or PUP for short.

The new incentive schemes involve an annual element and a long-term plan. Essentially directors can collect up to 200 per cent of their salaries in shares after four years if certain per-

sonal and corporate performance targets are met.

In Sir Richard's case, this could be close to £5m over the three year period in which, amongst other things, the company must rank amongst the top 10 companies in the FTSE 100 index.

Meanwhile, the premium for top investment bankers was underlined yesterday with the publication of the £517,000 total remuneration paid to Martin Owen, the chief executive of NatWest Markets. He earned more than his boss, Derek Wan-

less, the chief executive of the whole NatWest Group.

According to NatWest's annual report and accounts for 1995, Mr Wanless had a total remuneration package of £595,000, a 19 per cent increase on the previous year.

£400m buyback to boost Guinness earnings

TOM STEVENSON
City Editor

A day after disappointing investors by failing to come up with a scheme to return cash to shareholders, Guinness moved into the market yesterday to buy 100 million shares at 463p. The move was welcomed by analysts who expect it to be marginally earnings enhancing this year.

Guinness chairman Tony Greener said: "We are clear that our strategy, growing brands of alcoholic drink around the world, remains essentially an or-

ganic one. Our principal focus is reinvestment for growth in our existing business. Financial resource, where not required in the business, will be returned to shareholders in the most efficient manner."

The share buyback, conducted on Guinness's behalf by Cazenove, followed the announcement on Thursday of disappointing full year figures dragged down by lower profits in the company's United Distillers spirits arm.

Despite heavy spending on marketing, Guinness had to

struggle to overcome depressed economies around the world.

While profits were flat, however, cash flow remained strong during the year with net debt at the Johnnie Walker to Guinness stout group falling by almost £200m.

Guinness also managed an 8 per cent rise in the dividend payout which has increased by 33 per cent over the past four years, compared with an average rise of 28 per cent for FTSE100 companies and an inflation rate over the same period of only 12 per cent.

Standard & Poor's, the credit rating agency, confirmed its previous double A minus debt rating for Guinness, saying the move did not depart from "Guinness's historically moderate financial policies."

A return of some value to shareholders had been expected since last year's annual meeting when Guinness received approval from its shareholders to buy back up to 200 million shares, representing 10 per cent of its equity.

"They are setting an example that other companies should

follow", Panmure Gordon analyst Colin Humphreys said "When you have fairly mature businesses that aren't really growing but generate lots of cash, you should return money to shareholders."

Guinness shares edged 4.5p higher to 465p as analysts factored in earnings enhancement in a full year of about 1.7 per cent. The deal is expected to increase gearing to 33-35 per cent by the end of the year, compared with expectations that gearing would fall during the year from 28-32 per cent.

LVMH, the French luxury goods and spirits business which owned 20 per cent of Guinness, did not take part in the buyback and its stake rose by one percentage point as a result. Announcing its own results on Thursday, the French company said it had no intention of reducing its holding.

Guinness said that under UK tax law, 32p of the cost of buying each share would be counted as a distribution. Tax exempt shareholders would therefore be eligible for a tax credit worth 81p a share.

Gummer rejects BAE's plan for Bristol airport

British Aerospace's plan to run a second commercial airport for Bristol has been refused by the Environment Secretary John Gummer.

The refusal leaves a question mark over the future of BAE's north Bristol Filton site, former home production base of Concorde and now a major facility for the European Airbus.

The aircraft company had said that its proposal for a business airport using Filton's runway - one of the longest in Europe - was vital in securing the jobs of 3,700 employees. Income from the airport would have reduced the £1.5m annual operating deficit of the field.

Mr Gummer announced his decision at a business seminar in Bristol today. It follows weeks of speculation on the plan to rival the municipally-owned Lulsgate Airport for business traffic. Mr Gummer said that he was accepting the recommendation for dismissal by Ms Jean Bruchfield, who conducted a three-month public inquiry into the proposal last year.

Mr Gummer said: "I recognise that this decision, while welcome to many local residents, will disappoint others, particularly local businesses. But the decision ends a substantial period of uncertainty about future air services in the region."

"It leaves Bristol's existing airport at Lulsgate with the opportunity to develop its services and the new terminal which was granted planning consent last year."

The government will now commission a study of future demand for air travel in the region and the capacity of existing airport facilities, he said.

BAE's proposal would have involved converting an existing building to a business terminal. The company had hoped for around 23,000 aircraft movements a year, including 6,000 at night - mainly business and freight traffic to UK and Continental destinations.

National Express in front for Gatwick rail franchise

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR
Transport Correspondent

National Express, the coach company, has emerged as the surprise preferred bidder for the Gatwick Express rail franchise, beating off bids from Virgin and the management buyout team which had linked in with British Airways.

Disappointed bidders for the Gatwick Express franchise were yesterday told of their failure to gain preferred bidder status and National Express has now entered a two-week sole negotiation period with the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising. There has been consternation

in the City over the leaky nature of the bidding process. One insider said that this was partly a result of OPRF's refusal to publish any information about the process. He said: "If OPRF published the shortlist of bidders, and then announced its decision as soon as it was made, we would not have these problems." There have been two surges in National Express's share price over the past 10 days, suggesting that knowledge of its success leaked out.

The company is also the favourite to win the Midland Main Line franchise, but there are now doubts over whether Roger Salmon, the franchising

director, would want a single company to be awarded two franchises. Mr Salmon is, however, facing a dilemma over the paucity of bidders shortlisted for the second tranche of four lines which are currently at the final bid stage.

Sea Containers is known to be the sole preferred bidder for the East Coast Main Line, and Compagnie Generale des Eaux is in the final stages of negotiation to take over Network South Central.

With management buyout teams now out of favour, Mr Salmon may have little choice but to award two franchises to National Express.

Profits plunge at Wilson Connolly

Wilson Connolly confirmed the dire state of the house-building market last year with a plunge in sales and profits from its mass market housing operation, which sells three and four-bedroom houses for about £50,000, writes Tom Stevenson. The fall in profits, from £38.2m to £22.2m, was well below expectations in the City and the shares tumbled 12p to 162p.

Lynn Wilson, chairman, said: "The recovery in the housing market since 1992 gave hope that the worst of the recession was over. Sadly 1995 was yet another false dawn: continuing job insecurity, reductions in mortgage tax relief and the lack of fiscal support for the housing market have all impacted on fragile consumer confidence."

Turnover at the Midlands-based housebuilder collapsed from £116m to £24.5m as the number of completions fell to 3,870 from 1994's 4,200. Analysts had been expecting a maintained level of completions last year, but the company said it had difficulties getting planning consent for enough sites following a tightening of the planning regime.

In order to push sales, and because the group continued to chew the incentives offered by housebuilders increasingly reluctant to tempt buyers, the group was forced to cut prices. The average selling price actually rose from £58,000 to £59,600, but only because there was an increase in the number of higher priced three and four bedroom houses in the sales mix.

The gloomy news from Wilson Connolly, one of the industry's more highly regarded companies, follows disappointing announcements from other builders including Beazer, earlier this week, and Jarman, which recently decided to pull out of new housebuilding altogether, swapping its assets for Wimpey's construction and minerals operations.

According to Wilson, the changes in the structure of the housing market in recent years are unparalleled for several decades. "The metamorphosis cannot be measured on an annual basis but will result in a small group of highly professional housing developers, of which we shall be a part."

STOCK MARKETS									
Indices									
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1995/96 High	1995/96 Low	Yield (%)			
FTSE 100	3685.40	-7.60	-0.2	3781.30	2954.20	4.01			
FTSE 250	4282.20	+8.20	+0.2	4282.20	3300.90	3.46			
FTSE 350	1554.00	-3.20	-0.1	1899.00	1482.40	3.89			
FT Small Cap	2080.56	+1.36	+0.1	2080.56	1679.61	3.99			
FT All Share	1933.48	-1.90	-0.1	1964.99	1499.23	3.33			
New York	5634.11	-35.40	-0.6	5683.60	3932.08	2.15			
Tokyo	20442.60	Cloned		21118.30	14465.40	0.771			
Hong Kong	10536.53	-43.97	-0.4	11119.48	8967.93	3.471			
Frankfurt	2485.90	-7.36	-0.3	2501.22	1910.56	1.961			

Figures at close of business 21/3/96

INTEREST RATES									
Money Market Rates									
Index	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	10 Year	30 Year	5 Year	10 Year	30 Year
UK	5.97	6.34	6.05	6.53	6.17	6.48			
US	5.22	5.96	6.35	7.22	6.87	7.46			
Japan	0.99	0.91	3.20	3.69					
Germany	3.34	3.35	6.48	7.12	7.22				

CURRENCIES									
Pound									
Index	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago						
\$ (London)	1.5364	+0.01c	1.532						
¥ (London)	163.70	+0.40c	167.85						
DM (London)	2.2700	+0.01p	2.2105						
₹ (London)	163.754	+0.833	141.466						
₹ Index	84.0	+0.3	84.6						

OTHER INDICATORS									
Index	Yesterday	Day's chg	Year Ago	Index	Yesterday	Day's chg	Year Ago	Index	Yesterday
Oil Brent \$	19.13	+0.26	17.05	RPI	150.2	+2.9p	146.0	21 Mar	
Gold \$	395.00	-0.35	392.40	GDP	107.1	0.5p	105.1	28 Mar	
Gold £	257.09	-0.92	240.81	Base Rates			6.75		

- Weekend Money section**
- Futures: Traded options that won't break the bank
 - Insurance: The demise of "knock for knock"
 - Council tax: Getting the right valuation
 - Share dealing: On the Crest of a wave

Orange set for £2.45bn valuation on day of flotation

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Fat cats stalk Britain's boardrooms again



COMMENT

The rights and wrongs of each case must be judged individually, but the cumulative effect of the headlines is likely to be serious stuff for the Government in the run-up to the election.

Executive pay in Britain seems as inextricably linked to what is happening in the US as the stock market is. *Business Week* this month chronicled how greed in the boardroom was taking off again, just in time to be an awkward issue for the pro-business Republicans as presidential elections approach.

The same thing seems to be happening in Britain. Disclosures so far in the current reporting season suggest another executive pay scandal in the making. Embarrassment in the boardroom at the political and shareholder impact of last year's fat cat scandals seems to have had little impact. This week we have had BP paying out a cool quarter million to Bob Horton, the former chairman who left in 1992, while Commercial Union set a brisk pace in the insurance industry with a 26 per cent rise for John Carter, its chief executive. Then there has been the ill-timed verdict of ICI's 42 per cent pay rise for Sir Ronald Hampel, chairman of the Cadbury Committee Mark II on corporate governance. Sir Ronald will be reviewing the operation of the Greenbury rules on executive pay, presumably in favour of those who want excess.

To cap it all, we now have the £2.1m pay package over 18 months of Sir Richard Sykes, chief executive of Glaxo, accompanied by a juicy performance scheme that could eventually pay out millions more. These are the sort of rewards that should go

to entrepreneurs, rather than people who are essentially managers. In Sir Richard's case, it surely would have been right to have awaited the success or otherwise of the Wellcome merger before paying out such wealth.

The rights and wrongs of each case must be judged individually, but the cumulative effect of the headlines is likely to be serious stuff for the Government in the run up to the election.

Fresh voices raised against Mr Murdoch

Regulation seems to have become about the only growth industry in Britain. If there's a problem, regulate it, is the general rule. With so many growing empires jostling for position, it is hardly surprising they should start to tread on each other's toes. The latest to do so is Don Cruickshank, the telecoms regulator. Now he's trying to gain jurisdiction over Rupert Murdoch, whose interests, though they stretch far and wide, do not yet include telephones. He wants Mr Murdoch's BSkyB to alter the terms on which it supplies the cable industry with pay-TV channels, and has recommended to the Office of Fair Trading, which is investigating the issue.

Mr Murdoch has seen off the US House of Representatives, the Australian Government and the woefully ineffectual Office of Fair Trading on many occasions in the past.

Mr Cruickshank may be another matter. He has spent the last few years honing his combat skills on the mighty BT, forcing prices down and encouraging the competition to flourish. Most recently, he has sought sweeping new powers against anti-competition practices in the telecommunications market.

That, it seems, is not enough to keep him occupied. He now wants to take on Mr Murdoch's stranglehold on the pay-TV market, which in Mr Cruickshank's view is threatening the health of the cable telephony business. His solutions are based on the same, interventionist approach he has perfected in his dealings with BT.

Of course, he has no power to impose his remedies on the pay-TV market, but his hard-hitting recommendations to the OFT could nevertheless help set the agenda for change. Not everyone appreciates his zeal for reform. Just ask the Independent Television Commission. But given how little has been done to date to rein in Mr Murdoch, maybe we should be listening to some fresh, and tough, voices.

The right strategy for Guinness

The instinctive reaction to share buybacks is to question what managements are being paid for if it is not to think of ways to invest the cash their companies generate. If Guinness has accepted, as it appears to have

done, that building brands can only be achieved with a huge marketing push, then it could be argued that £460m would be better spent backing Johnnie Walker, Gordon's and the famous black stuff than giving shareholders an Easter bonus.

Like most knee-jerk reactions, this one is probably wrong. There is a limit to how much can sensibly be spent on promotion and at £500m last year, with a promised double digit increase this time, Guinness is close to the point at which it starts throwing money at campaigns just because they are there and not because they are likely to generate a decent pay-back. The Cruzcampo debacle is a salutary reminder of what can happen when cash is spent in haste.

Buying back only half the number of shares for which it gained permission at last year's annual meeting is a sensible compromise, leaving the door ajar on the two most widely rumoured corporate deals: acquiring the two-thirds of Moët Hennessy it does not yet own or, less likely, a tilt at struggling Allied Domecq's spirits arm. For the time being, buybacks also remain a highly tax-effective way of delivering value to big, gross fund shareholders.

Tony Greener, the chairman, has been preaching the current stockmarket mantra of focus for some time now, so it should come as no surprise that he sees his job as growing the core business as fast as he sensibly can and handing any cash he can't use to that end back to its owners. Clearly this

does not produce fireworks in the share price, but while the world market for spirits and beer remains so dull, it's probably the right strategy. Bernard Arnault of LVMH, Guinness's biggest shareholder, may not necessarily agree but then he has a rather different agenda: eventual control of Guinness's liquor interests.

Expect a hiccup from the mad cow scare

The pound lost half a penny and gilts fell by nearly a point yesterday. An over-reaction to the mad-cow scare? The City's instant analysis focused on the worst case: all 11m cattle slaughtered, the dairy industry destroyed and no substitution for beef by other British meats. This nightmare scenario is unlikely, but a hiccup in the economy seems the very least we can expect.

It is impossible to quantify the likely effects until scientists can say how many people might fall ill, until the Government reaches a decision about how many cattle must be slaughtered, until the extent of bans overseas is known, and until British consumers decide whether to abandon beef altogether. The one thing that is certain is that the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement will be higher, by anything between hundreds of millions and billions of pounds. The markets looked at the bottom line - and probably got their judgement about right.

Orange set for £2.45bn valuation on float day

MARY FAGAN
Industrial Correspondent

Shares in Orange, the mobile telephony company due for flotation next week, are expected to be priced at the top of the range of 175p to 205p, valuing the company at £2.45bn. The final decision will be announced on Wednesday morning with dealings beginning later that day.

Demand from institutions has exceeded expectations, with applications in for eight times the number of shares available. More than 135,000 prospectuses have been sent on request to small private investors, many of them Orange customers, although no incentives are being offered to participate in the sale. The retail offer closed last night with the offer to institutions running until Monday evening.

Orange, the newest of the four mobile telephone network companies, is owned by Hutchison Whampoa of Hong Kong and British Aerospace. Following the sale of 25 per cent of the shares, Hutchison will

own 50.49 per cent of Orange and BAe 22.92 per cent.

Orange refuses to say when it will be in profit, but City analysts expect it to break even next year. The proceeds from the sale are likely to be used to repay debt to shareholders.

Orange has been credited with raising public awareness of mobile telephony with pricing packages aimed at the average person rather than company executives. The company pioneered the notion of bundling a number of "free" call minutes in return for a set monthly charge. It also offers the ability to have two "lines" on one telephone so that some customers can use one for business and one for personal calls.

Orange has a tiny market share with 443,000 subscribers at the end of last month compared with almost 2.5 million for Vodafone, the leading player, and a similar number for Cellnet. However the company points out that its entire network is digital - which is where the industry's future growth lies. Vodafone now has 500,000 digital subscribers with the re-



Mobile contender: Hans Snook, Orange's group managing director, says the company is determined to compete on quality and value as well as on price

mainder still using the older analogue network. The flotation received a boost earlier this year when the Government opened the way for further expansion of the mobile telephone industry by making available to all four existing operators more capacity on the airwaves. The limited spectrum available makes it increasingly unlikely that a fifth company will be licensed to compete in the mobile market place.

Mercury One-2-One, Orange has been taken seriously by Vodafone and Cellnet, both of which are poised to introduce similar types of bundled tariff packages for the consumer market. However in spite of what appears to be an emerging price war, Orange denies that it will need to drop its charges in response to the challenge from the major players. Hans Snook, Orange's group managing director, said the company would not be forced into competing primar-

ily on price rather than on "quality and value for money". There is a view that Orange will nevertheless be forced into increasingly innovative pricing as competition continues to bite. Recently the company announced a service which allows customers with two lines on their mobile to make unlimited calls at weekends on one of the lines for 5p per minute. The low-cost deal will be in exchange for an extra monthly fee of £2.50.

Mortgage cash-backs will escape tax net

CLIFFORD GERMAN

The cash-backs borrowers receive on special mortgage deals are definitely not liable to capital gains tax, nor are customer rebates on the list price of cars, the Inland Revenue admitted this week after taking advice from its lawyers.

Any taxpayers who have been charged CGT on their cashbacks should contact their tax office to establish how the assessment and any appeal will be dealt with.

Tax accountants welcomed the change of heart, but Chris Williams, tax specialist at accountants Pannell Kerr Forster complained yesterday that the timing of the announcement left investors very little time to make use of the concession by selling their assets to make full use of their annual allowance of £6,000 worth of tax-free capital gains before the end of the current tax year.

The Revenue will shortly publish guidance on circumstances where cashbacks could be liable to income tax, but this

is more likely to apply to cash-backs received by motor traders. It is unlikely to affect building society borrowers many thousands of whom have received cashbacks in the last 12-18 months.

The Inland Revenue has also clarified the tax treatment of windfall payments building society members receive for approving mergers, takeovers and conversions of their societies from mutual to banking status. Members who receive a cash bonus for approving the merger of two building societies which remain mutuals do have to pay income tax on the windfall.

The last such payment was to members of the North of England BS when it was merged with the Northern Rock 18 months ago. The Inland Revenue admitted however that there is no mechanism for requiring societies to deduct tax at source before making the payments, and investors are expected to declare the bonuses voluntarily.

If a society converts into a bank, or is taken over by a bank or some other non-mutual organisation however, the cash and/or shares members receive, as a result, will be regarded as capital gains not income.

Even cash payments will be regarded as a capital gain and will not be liable to income tax. Shares received as part of a conversion or takeover will become potentially liable to capital gains tax but only if the proceeds exceed the tax-exempt allowance, if and when the shares are sold.

Pannell Kerr Forster believes the Inland Revenue can still be challenged on its ruling however. Investors are advised to declare such payments on their tax forms, and then challenge any tax which is charged against them.

The Inland Revenue's latest ruling made no mention at all of the loyalty bonuses recently awarded to members by the Britannia Building Society for remaining loyal to a society which does not plan to merge or convert.

BRANCH INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS CURRENT INTEREST RATES

EFFECTIVE FROM 23 MARCH 1996

Minimum Investment	Current Rate	Annual Rate	Minimum Investment	Current Rate	Annual Rate
120 DAY ACCOUNT ¹ (Annual & Monthly)			100,000 or more	2.60	1.95
£50,000 or more	2.60	1.95	£25,000 - £99,999	1.90	1.43
£25,000 - £49,999	1.60	1.15	£10,000 - £24,999	1.45	1.09
£10,000 - £24,999	1.40	1.00	£2,500 - £9,999	0.65	0.49
£2,500 - £9,999	1.30	0.95	£500 - £2,499	0.60	0.45
£500 - £2,499	1.20	0.90	£100 - £499	0.50	0.38
£100 - £499	1.10	0.85			
90 DAY ACCOUNT ¹ (Annual & Monthly)					
£100,000 or more	2.60	1.95			
£25,000 - £99,999	1.60	1.15			
£10,000 - £24,999	1.40	1.00			
£2,500 - £9,999	1.30	0.95			
£500 - £2,499	1.20	0.90			
£100 - £499	1.10	0.85			
£50 - £99	1.00	0.75			
£25 - £49	0.90	0.68			
£10 - £24	0.80	0.60			
£5 - £9	0.70	0.53			
£1 - £4	0.60	0.45			
£0.50 - £0.99	0.50	0.38			
£0.25 - £0.49	0.40	0.30			
£0.10 - £0.24	0.30	0.23			
£0.05 - £0.09	0.20	0.15			
£0.01 - £0.04	0.10	0.08			
£0.00 - £0.00	0.00	0.00			
60 DAY ACCOUNT ¹ (Annual & Monthly)					
£100,000 or more	2.60	1.95			
£25,000 - £99,999	1.60	1.15			
£10,000 - £24,999	1.40	1.00			
£2,500 - £9,999	1.30	0.95			
£500 - £2,499	1.20	0.90			
£100 - £499	1.10	0.85			
£50 - £99	1.00	0.75			
£25 - £49	0.90	0.68			
£10 - £24	0.80	0.60			
£5 - £9	0.70	0.53			
£1 - £4	0.60	0.45			
£0.50 - £0.99	0.50	0.38			
£0.25 - £0.49	0.40	0.30			
£0.10 - £0.24	0.30	0.23			
£0.05 - £0.09	0.20	0.15			
£0.01 - £0.04	0.10	0.08			
£0.00 - £0.00	0.00	0.00			
30 DAY ACCOUNT ¹ (Annual & Monthly)					
£100,000 or more	2.60	1.95			
£25,000 - £99,999	1.60	1.15			
£10,000 - £24,999	1.40	1.00			
£2,500 - £9,999	1.30	0.95			
£500 - £2,499	1.20	0.90			
£100 - £499	1.10	0.85			
£50 - £99	1.00	0.75			
£25 - £49	0.90	0.68			
£10 - £24	0.80	0.60			
£5 - £9	0.70	0.53			
£1 - £4	0.60	0.45			
£0.50 - £0.99	0.50	0.38			
£0.25 - £0.49	0.40	0.30			
£0.10 - £0.24	0.30	0.23			
£0.05 - £0.09	0.20	0.15			
£0.01 - £0.04	0.10	0.08			
£0.00 - £0.00	0.00	0.00			
15 DAY ACCOUNT ¹ (Annual & Monthly)					
£100,000 or more	2.60	1.95			
£25,000 - £99,999	1.60	1.15			
£10,000 - £24,999	1.40	1.00			
£2,500 - £9,999	1.30	0.95			
£500 - £2,499	1.20	0.90			
£100 - £499	1.10	0.85			
£50 - £99	1.00	0.75			
£25 - £49	0.90	0.68			
£10 - £24	0.80	0.60			
£5 - £9	0.70	0.53			
£1 - £4	0.60	0.45			
£0.50 - £0.99	0.50	0.38			
£0.25 - £0.49	0.40	0.30			
£0.10 - £0.24	0.30	0.23			
£0.05 - £0.09	0.20	0.15			
£0.01 - £0.04	0.10	0.08			
£0.00 - £0.00	0.00	0.00			
7 DAY ACCOUNT ¹ (Annual & Monthly)					
£100,000 or more	2.60	1.95			
£25,000 - £99,999	1.60	1.15			
£10,000 - £24,999	1.40	1.00			
£2,500 - £9,999	1.30	0.95			
£500 - £2,499	1.20	0.90			
£100 - £499	1.10	0.85			
£50 - £99	1.00	0.75			
£25 - £49	0.90	0.68			
£10 - £24	0.80	0.60			
£5 - £9	0.70	0.53			
£1 - £4	0.60	0.45			
£0.50 - £0.99	0.50	0.38			
£0.25 - £0.49	0.40	0.30			
£0.10 - £0.24	0.30	0.23			
£0.05 - £0.09	0.20	0.15			
£0.01 - £0.04	0.10	0.08			
£0.00 - £0.00	0.00	0.00			
1 DAY ACCOUNT ¹ (Annual & Monthly)					
£100,000 or more	2.60	1.95			
£25,000 - £99,999	1.60	1.15			
£10,000 - £24,999	1.40	1.00			
£2,500 - £9,999	1.30	0.95			
£500 - £2,499	1.20	0.90			
£100 - £499	1.10	0.85			
£50 - £99	1.00	0.75			
£25 - £49	0.90	0.68			
£10 - £24	0.80	0.60			
£5 - £9	0.70	0.53			
£1 - £4	0.60	0.45			
£0.50 - £0.99	0.50	0.38			
£0.25 - £0.49	0.40	0.30			
£0.10 - £0.24	0.30	0.23			
£0.05 - £0.09	0.20	0.15			
£0.01 - £0.04	0.10	0.08			
£0.00 - £0.00	0.00	0.00			

Notes: (1) All rates are subject to change without notice. (2) Current Account minimum opening balance £2,500. (3) Current Account Gold minimum opening balance £10,000. (4) Tax free provided on withdrawal of capital are made during the 5-year term and Terms & Conditions are complied with. (5) Interest is not paid on balances below £50 unless the account holder is a registered small business owner, under 25 years of age. (6) Please contact your local branch for full details. (7) The minimum opening balance on all other accounts has been increased temporarily to £2,500. It also reserves the right to close accounts opened after 10th January 1996 if the balance falls below £2,500.

NORTHERN ROCK

Northern Rock Building Society, Principal Office: Northern Rock House, Gresham, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4PL

IN BRIEF

• House sales in England and Wales dropped 5,000 to 92,000 last month, according to Inland Revenue figures. The figures raised a question mark over widespread predictions of a recovery in the housing market this year. But City analysts dismissed them as a blip on an upward trend. In both November and December, there were 89,000 sales, according to the seasonally adjusted Inland Revenue data, climbing to 97,000 in January.

• General Motors said yesterday that 26 of its 29 North American assembly plants remain shut down and 177,775 workers are still idle, despite a tentative agreement reached yesterday with the United Auto Workers in the strike at two brake plants in Dayton, Ohio. Analysts expected the union to ratify the deal and GM said it would make no further comment until the vote was known. Analysts expect it will take about a week for GM to return to full production if the deal is approved, after parts shortages closed down the carmaker's entire U.S. operations in the 17-day strike.

• General Electric's subsidiary GE Engine Services has won a 10-year contract from British Airways worth \$2.3m for engine overhaul and repairs, the company said yesterday. It said the work will be carried out at its Nangar, Wales plant, and engines will be repaired including Rolls-Royce RB211s and Pratt & Whitney JT8 and JT9 engines.

• French and US diplomats played down a looming battle over transatlantic air travel rights yesterday but their posturing showed a new aggressive edge in the ties between old yet often prickly allies. France disclosed that its civil aviation authority was readying reprisals against seven US airlines following Washington's decision to block an increase in Air France's summer service to the United States. The French press followed Washington's rejection on Thursday of Air France's request to add 500 flights, representing 176,000 seats, flying from Paris to New York, Los Angeles, Houston and Washington for the peak summer holiday season.

• Fortnum & Mason, the Piccadilly food store, reported record interim profits, up 17 per cent at £2.5m after sales topped ahead 10 per cent to £20.6m. The company said it enjoyed "highly satisfactory" pre-Christmas trade which was well ahead of expectations. Fortnum warned, however, that export sales would fall in the second half following an exceptionally strong second period last year. Earnings per share increased from 310p to 362p. The dividend remained at 80p.

• Yorkshire Foods shares rose sharply yesterday after the ingredients and baking group announced a sharp increase in sales and operating profits along with bullish growth prospects. Sales increased by more than one-third and shares closed 7p higher at 82p.

Gehe bid referred to UK

MAGNUS GRIMOND

The European Commission yesterday referred scrutiny of the £650m bid by Gehe of Germany for Lloyds Chemists back to the UK authorities. The bid now looks certain to be sent before the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, which is already looking at an earlier offer from UniChem, a rival British chemists chain.

In a statement, Karel van Miert, the commissioner in charge of competition policy, said Gehe-Lloyds and UniChem would have over two-thirds of the wholesale market to independent chemists following a merger and the market share would be "significantly higher" in certain regions. They would be the only two wholesalers operating in the whole of the UK and supplying a full range of pharmaceutical products.

business

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN
Edited by TOM STEVENSON

Wilson Connolly still overrated

Six months ago we expressed surprise in this column at the generous treatment of house-builder Wilson Connolly's share price after a disappointing set of interim figures. Since then, despite a continued deterioration in the housing market, the shares have nudged curiously higher, so yesterday's 7 per cent fall from 174p to 162.5p, after even worse full-year numbers, was about time.

Wilson Connolly is proof positive of the lethargy of investors, who will often continue supporting a company long after it has become evident that the investment story has changed. The company is still the well-run outfit that impressed shareholders in the 1980s, but the environment in which it operates has changed out of all recognition.

Profits for the year to December at £22.5m represented a dramatic collapse from the £38.2m achieved in 1994. They were also well below already reduced expectations of nearer £20m. Earnings per share tumbled from 13.5p to 8.1p, leaving the maintained 4.5p dividend covered, if less than generously.

As the company freely admits 1995 was a false dawn. The problems persuading house-buyers to part with their cash were also exacerbated by a tightening of the planning process which meant that analysts' expectations of 4,200 completions during the year were badly underpinned at 3,870.

That had a double effect on profits because in order to boost flagging volumes, Wilson had to slash prices lower than it would otherwise have done. Lower volumes would be expected to reduce the net margin, through poor overhead recovery, but lower prices hit the gross margin as well.

The bad news is that the outlook for price rises remains as bleak as ever. The bottom end of the market that Wilson occupies, with its three and four-bedroom houses selling for an average of less than £60,000, remains wickedly competitive. This is very much a buyer's market.

House prices are cheaper than ever, say the builders, trotting out the usu-

al price to wages ratios and low mortgage cost arguments. Actually, says one broker, they are merely more affordable, an important distinction because cheapness is quickly rectified by an efficient market while affordability can persist for years.

One of the reasons Wilson's share price has remained as resilient as it has over the past year or so is the undoubted financial stability of the company. At the year end the balance sheet sported £33m of net cash.

If the recovery implied by this gloomy backdrop is as gentle as many observers fear, however, then house-builders should be valued on a very different basis from that currently used by the market. And a p/e of 19 falling to 16, assuming profits of £25m this year and £30m next time, is much too high

a rating, with little support from a dividend yield of only 3.5 per cent. The market is still being over generous. Sell.

Still questions over McBride

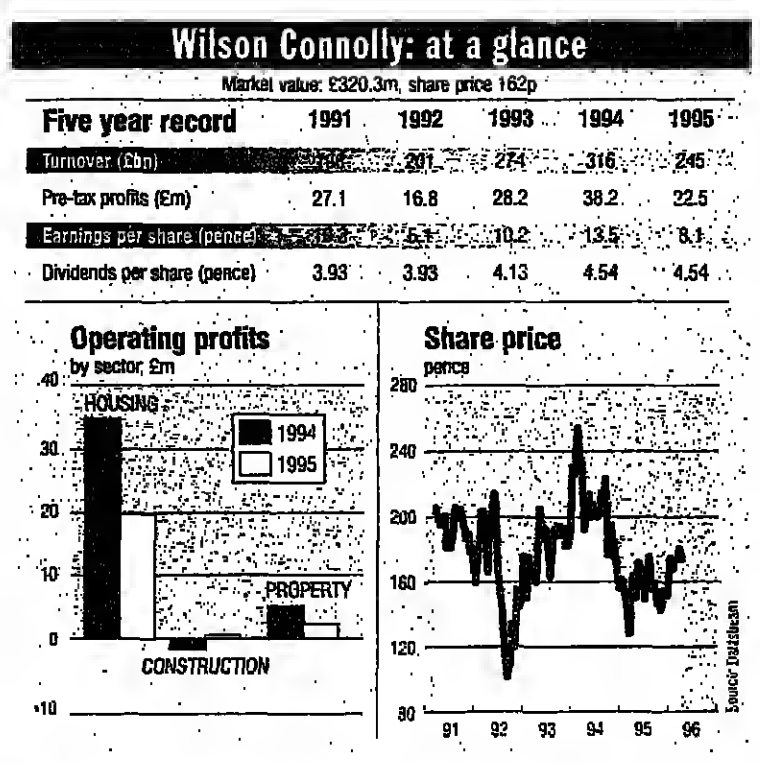
The flotation of McBride, Europe's highest maker of own-label detergents, has left a good deal of egg splattered over the new face of SBC Warburg, the blue chip merchant bank which sponsored the issue. Floated at 185p last July, the shares are now languishing at 129p, up 5p yesterday, after a catalogue of woes hit the company last year, forcing it to issue a profits warning in January.

McBride has taken action to sort out management in the Barrow and Middleton operations, where last year's difficulties were concentrated, and is set to take another 200 jobs out of the group in the second half, on top of 400 already slated to go over two years at Middleton. The cost of the extra redundancies will depress second half profits, but should bring benefits on top of the £4m annualised returns expected from the shake-up already underway at Middleton.

With raw materials either flat or falling, management is confident the worst is now over and has declared a maiden dividend of 2.25p, in line with the prospectus forecast. But plenty of questions continue to hang over McBride.

It is not entirely clear that everything that happened last year was due to bad luck. It transpires that the company was already having difficulty meeting demand for conventional powders produced by Barrow in May, well before the realisation dawned in July that the new super-concentrated detergents being made for Sainsbury and Safeway caused clogging in the machines. More seriously, it is now facing a new price war launched by Procter & Gamble, the Fairy Liquid to Ariel giant, which has been suffering market share erosion.

Next year is clearly going to remain competitive. Kleinwort Benson expects profits to recover to £21m this year, rising to £30m next. A 1996-97 multiple of 10 would appear to discount the worst, but this management has a lot to prove. Continue to avoid.



RJR Nabisco scotches settlement rumours

DAVID USBORNE
New York

While Philip Morris published full-page newspaper advertisements refuting claims that it manipulates nicotine levels in its cigarettes, its rival RJR Nabisco moved yesterday to play down suggestions that it might seek a global liability settlement to protect itself against future consumer lawsuits.

RJR Nabisco was reacting to remarks attributed to its chief executive officer, Steven Goldstone, published in yesterday's *Financial Times*, hinting that the company would consider some kind of general settlement and payment of compensation in return for immunity

from any future lawsuits. In a statement, RJR Nabisco insisted that it remains determined to contest the legion of lawsuits now pending in the US against the industry. The company, it said, "has no intention of settling any of the litigation in which it is currently involved because it is confident it will those cases".

The cigarette makers were stunned when their ranks were broken last week by Benoit LeBow, owner of the Liggett LeBow, when he reached out-of-court settlements with two big groups suing the industry. In an interview with the *Financial Times*, Mr Goldstone said that the question was open, "whether there can be a way on an all-embracing basis to solve the problem once and

for all. I don't know of a way, but I do know that it isn't the kind of thing that the tobacco industry would try to obstruct, because we know that litigation is not good for our companies".

In its advertising blitz, Philip Morris, meanwhile, was responding to the allegations of three of its former scientists made public on Monday by the Food and Drug Administration, in which they contended that the company had systematically regulated the levels of nicotine in their cigarette products. The company, which makes the Marlboro brand, plastered newspaper pages with the headline: "What does Philip Morris have to say about the allegation of 'nicotine manipulation'? Plenty."

£60m bids unveiled by GWR

MATTHEW HORSMAN
Media Editor

GWR, the fast-growing regional radio company, yesterday launched a £24.3m recommended bid for East Anglian Radio, and announced it was applying to the New Zealand government to buy 75 per cent of Radio New Zealand for a price not to exceed £37.9m.

The balance would be held by New Zealand financial institutions, the company said.

To help finance the two bids, GWR is launching a rights issue to raise as much as £36m. It has already received acceptances representing 63.8 per cent of East Anglian, the company said in a statement yesterday.

The company's shares dropped 5p to 246p, on news of the rights issue. GWR is offering 10,551,111 shares for each East Anglian Radio share, worth £25.50 a share. There is a cash alternative of £23.46 per share.

Last year, GWR fought hard to win Chilren Radio, a competing commercial radio company. It confirmed early this year it would expand aggressively, both in the UK and overseas.

Radio is the fastest growing advertising medium in the UK, according to industry figures. Last year, total advertising revenues grew to £270m, from £220m a year earlier. Audience figures have also moved sharply higher in recent years, overtaking BBC Radio early in 1995.

This robust performance has already led to significant consolidation, as bigger groups such as GWR move in on the competition. The Broadcasting Bill is expected to ignite a further wave of takeovers, once national newspapers are allowed to own radio licences outright.

IN BRIEF

- **BTR**, the diversified industrial group at which Ian Strachan recently took over from Alan Jackson as chief executive, said yesterday it is planning to withdraw from Taiwan. The company is seeking prospective buyers for its holding in China General Group, which in turn has investments in five Taiwanese companies. BTR has reportedly failed to reach targeted earnings in the Far East largely due to problems at its Taiwanese operations.
- **Avonside**, the building group, reported a £5.2m loss for 1995, hit by property write-downs and re-organisation costs. The group, which made a £5.5m profit in 1994, said it was not confident West Heartland with prices expected to remain under pressure. The final dividend was axed, leaving shareholders with the 1p interim payout, compared to last year's total dividend of 4.4p.
- **CE Heath**, the insurance broker, yesterday confirmed the demerger of its computer services division Rebus Group which will be separately listed on the London Stock Exchange. Each CE Heath shareholder will receive one Rebus Share for each CE Heath share held on 9 April 1996. CE Heath will continue to be listed following the demerger. In order to provide the demerged company with capital, CE Heath will subscribe £4.5m for up to a maximum of 7.158 million Rebus shares, equating to a maximum of 9.5 per cent of the enlarged share capital of Rebus.
- **Wates City of London** exchanged contracts yesterday on the previously flagged acquisition of Britannia Tower from BP. The consideration is in two parts - an upfront payment of £30m followed by a second instalment which depends on the outcome of Wates's proposed development of the City site. Britannia Tower is the second tallest office building in the City of London with 300,000 square feet of space above ground on a site of over 100,000 square feet. Wates has a range of plans for the site, including shopping, entertainment, eating and leisure facilities.
- **British Airways** has awarded a 10-contract worth \$2.3bn to General Electric of the US for engine overhauls and repairs. GE said the work would be done at the Nantgarw plant in Wales belonging to its GE Engine Services subsidiary. Engines to be repaired include Rolls-Royce RB211s and Pratt & Whitney JT8 and JT9 engines.
- **London International**, the condom manufacturer, has appointed two new non executive directors. Roger Matthews is group finance director at Compass Group. The other director, Linda Collier, is a consultant and a former corporate finance director at Schroders.

COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Avonside (P)	75.0m (83.5m)	-4.2m (8.5m)	-11.82p (8.83p)	1p (4.4p)
Avonside (S)	17.65m (15.4m)	0.211 (-4.192)	2.7p (-1.77p)	1p (0.51p)
Global Group (P)	118.4m (82.9m)	2.911m (2.13m)	1.61p (1.17p)	0.8p (0.825p)
McBride (P)	243.1m (213.9m)	8m (14.7m)	3.7p (266.5p)	2.25p
Orkney Cattle (P)	34.8m (21.2m)	2.8m (2.4m)	7.7p (6.4p)	3p (2.75p)
Wilson (Connolly) (P)	223.2m (256.89m)	22.82m (38.2m)	8.1p (13.5p)	4.54p (4.54p)
Yorkshire Food (P)	174.30m (128.5m)	5.81m (6.88m)	10.47p (10.22p)	3.50p (3.52p)

(P) - Profit (S) - interim

John Willcock CITY DIARY

No trains please, we're keeping to the track

Advisers to the Railtrack sell-off had a terrible time persuading the company to sanction advertising which used pictures of rail tracks - without any trains on them. The directors apparently "went ballistic" when they heard of the plan to show rails without trains, but were quietly and firmly told that to show trains as well could be construed as misleading to investors. Does this mean advertising by the train operators should show trains not on tracks? In a meadow, perhaps...



Empty feeling: Trains could apparently be misleading

Richard Branson secretly smokes. We can exclusively reveal that a couple of weeks ago the Virgin boss cadged cigarettes off journalists at an evening reception to launch Virgin Direct, the personal finance arm of Branson's ever-spreading empire.

Although the four Silk Cut were "borrowed" off one journalist, the bearded entrepreneur made sure no photos were taken of him puffing, presumably to maintain his spotless image. It will be interesting to see what rates he sets for smokers with his new life assurance product.

"Burgered." That's the state.

Asda cleaned up on Valentine's Day last year by flogging its own-brand washing up liquid, "Passion Fruit", which bore the charming inscription: "Here's your bottle of bubbly with love". This wheeze stole brand leadership from Fairy liquid for a week in Asda stores, according to the company yesterday, as it revealed distinctly unbubbly intimacies.

The chain also came up with a Christmas version called "Winter Spice" - which was aimed at wives to buy for their husbands - an idea said to have come from Archie Norman, Asda's chief executive.

of the UK beef producing sector according to a note from James Capel yesterday. HSBC suffered a similar outbreak of punitis with "more than a flash in the pan" and "high steaks." Elsewhere in London over 1,300 "pan fried fillets of beef topped with celeriac and served in a red wine sauce" were unceremoniously binned at 2.30 in the afternoon.

Organisers of the Finance & Leasing Association annual dinner at the swish Grosvenor

House Hotel replaced them with chicken at the last minute, "because we thought people might be concerned".

Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, stunned the guests by cracking a funny joke: "There are three kinds of economist: those who can count and those who can't. Meanwhile the macho traders at Nikko Europe laughed in the face of death last night by decamping en masse to a burger bar. Where will it all end?"

United Newspapers, which owns the Express titles, recently completed an efficiency survey which suggested that the journalists needed a dress code. The slovenly backs should henceforward be clad in suits for men and pale blouses, dark skirts and tights for women. "Very square," said our in-house expert.

Revised Interest Rates

Amended Investment and Savings Rates.
Effective from 23rd March, 1996.

Minimum Investment	Gross*	Gross CAR**	Net†
Bonus Builder (Annually)**			
£100,000+	6.00%	-	4.80%
£50,000	5.75%	-	4.60%
£20,000	5.50%	-	4.40%
£10,000	5.00%	-	4.00%
£5,000	4.45%	-	3.56%
Bonus Builder (Monthly)**			
£100,000+	5.85%	-	4.68%
£50,000	5.60%	-	4.48%
£20,000	5.40%	-	4.32%
£10,000	4.90%	-	3.92%
£5,000	4.35%	-	3.48%
Britannia High Interest (Annually)			
£100,000+	5.00%	-	4.00%
£50,000	4.75%	-	3.80%
£20,000	4.50%	-	3.60%
£10,000	3.50%	-	3.20%
£5,000	3.60%	-	2.80%
Britannia Monthly Income (Monthly)			
£100,000+	4.85%	4.96%	3.88%
£50,000	4.60%	4.70%	3.68%
£20,000	4.40%	4.49%	3.52%
£10,000	3.90%	3.97%	3.12%
£5,000	3.40%	3.45%	2.72%
£2,500	2.75%	2.78%	2.20%
Flexible Savings Account (Annually)			
£50,000+	3.60%	-	2.88%
£20,000	3.35%	-	2.68%
£10,000	3.20%	-	2.56%
£5,000	2.90%	-	2.32%
£2,500	2.70%	-	2.16%
£500	2.50%	-	2.00%
LTD (Annually)			
£500+	3.25%	-	2.60%
£10	3.00%	-	2.40%
Brighter Savers (Half Yearly)			
£1	3.00%	3.02%	2.40%
Trustee Deposit (Annually)			
£50,000+	4.75%	-	3.80%
£25,000	4.50%	-	3.60%
£10,000	4.00%	-	3.20%
£5,000	3.50%	-	2.80%
Tax Exempt Charities (Annually)			
£25,000+	4.50%	-	-
£10,000	4.00%	-	-
£1	3.00%	-	-
Tiered Renewal Bond 3rd Issue (Anniversary) (for married bond holders only)			
£100,000+	5.75%	-	4.60%
£50,000	5.50%	-	4.40%
£20,000	5.25%	-	4.20%
£1,000	4.75%	-	3.80%

Effective from 1st April, 1996

Platinum and Flexi-TESSA (Annually) (2nd Issue)	
Platinum-TESSA	6.10% TAX FREE*
Flexi-TESSA	5.70% TAX FREE*

*The minimum balance for customers aged under 25 is £100. The minimum balance for all other customers is £500. (A rate of 0.10% Gross will be paid on any balance that temporarily falls below these minimum balance levels and the Account Interest Payments remain in the account. (Assuming rate of income tax at 20% applicable from 6th April 1996). For interest payable (and accounts closed) prior to 6th April 1996, interest will be deducted at 20%. (Including a 0.5% bonus for 1995 where no withdrawals have been made. Interest will be payable net of the applicable rate of income tax which may be reclaimed by non-taxpayers or gross, subject to the required registration. GWR and net rates are illustrative only and have been rounded to two decimal places. Rates may vary but are correct at the time of going to press. FOR INFORMATION: Details of interest rates paid on other accounts are available from any Britannia branch. You may be unsure as to whether your existing account is the best one for you. If so, please call into your local branch where we will be happy to explain the various schemes in detail.

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sport

Wilson draws the short straw

Swimming
GUY HODGSON
reports from Sheffield

British swimming is not so strong that any stipulation about selection will draw too much blood. When the ace fell behind the front two in the 1500 metres in the Olympic Trials last night, however, a potential medalist was left with gaping internal wounds.

Ian Wilson, a silver medalist in the world short course championships last year, was the unlucky man who will not be going to Atlanta this summer after finishing third at the British Championships in Sheffield. To compound a miserable day for him, his British record was also taken by Graeme Smith with a time of 15min 03.43sec.

What hurt more was the second place of Paul Palmer, who will hope to be taking part in three events in Georgia. "I don't know why someone who will be going to Atlanta in the 200 and 400 also wants to compete in the 1500," Wilson, from Leeds, had said before the race but looked like a man who had been gapped after it.

Palmer, realising that an Olympic medal in the 1500m might be a more viable prospect

than in the shorter events, had muscled in on Wilson's distance to take the second qualifying place. It was not even a close thing. Palmer crushing Wilson by 14 seconds.

The plot was three men going for two places but Smith, a European Championship silver medalist last August, soon made that equation one out of two with a blistering start. A second up after 100 metres, he had stretched that to 10 seconds two-thirds of the way through the race. He was gambling with his stamina but it paid off.

Palmer's tactic had been to hang on to the other two and hope his greater finishing speed would carry him into the top two places. Instead he had to chase the leader, which worked in his favour as Wilson was left in the process. By the end what was potentially the most competitive race in the trials had become a procession. Smith winning by 15 seconds.

Sarah Hardcastle was positively bullish - if that is an accepted term in these BSE-ridden days - about her chances in the women's 800m freestyle. "I believe I can win a medal," she said after qualifying to race in Atlanta with a time of 8:28.27 that was eight seconds inside the required time.

One of the reasons the 26-year-old from Bracknell returned to the sport in November 1992 was that she saw nothing at the Barcelona Olympics to suggest she would be out of her depth if she resumed a career that had climaxed with two medals in Los Angeles in 1984. Yesterday, you saw why.

Seven years older than any other woman in the final, she was in a different league as well as a different generation, creating a lead of six seconds at 400 metres and half the pool by the end. As she said: "There is no one coming through to take over from me when I retire."

Mark Foster also won by a large margin given that his distance, 50m freestyle, is as much a reflex action as a race. The Commonwealth Games gold medalist two years ago, and the world short-course champion in 1993, finished nearly half a second ahead of the second-placed Alan Rapley in 22.74.

Sue Rolph, who qualified for the women's 100m freestyle on Thursday, will be doubling up in Georgia after winning the 50m yesterday. The 17-year-old from the City of Newcastle has struck a lucrative vein of form because her 26.15 was her second personal best of the trials. Results, *Sporting Digest*, page 31

Blundell to miss IndyCar race

Motor racing

Mark Blundell is out of the Australian IndyCar Grand Prix at the end of the month following his spectacular crash in last weekend's Hollywood Rio 400 Grand Prix.

The British former Formula One driver sustained multiple fractures to his right foot when brake failure sent his PacWest Reynard into the wall on the 10th lap.

Bruce McCaw, the PacWest chief executive, said: "We're thankful that Mark was not

more seriously injured in what was a terrible crash. However, after he had a chance to get home and undergo a complete examination with his doctors, a decision was made - upon medical recommendation - that he should not race in Australia.

"Mark is going to need a little more time to heal. If anything happened in Australia, the risk of permanent damage would be unacceptably high. We're not willing to take any chances."

McCaw absolved Blundell of any blame for the crash in last

Sunday's race in the United States. "We have reviewed the circumstances surrounding the incident and have concluded that the cause of the accident was a mechanical failure, in which we assume full responsibility. There was no driver error involved," he said.

Although Blundell will not compete in Surfers' Paradise on 31 March, he will still travel with the team to Australia. "Mark is totally committed to the team and is disappointed that he will miss the series' first street race of the season," McCaw said.



Jennifer Capriati in first-round action at the Lipton Championships in Florida yesterday. "There is nothing like ripping a backhand down the line," she said. Photograph: AP

Capriati has faith in her rehabilitation

Tennis
JOHN ROBERTS
reports from Key Biscayne

Having successfully completed the latest match of her comeback, Jennifer Capriati, the embodiment of a prodigy with problems, was asked to reflect on her adolescence. "Well, I went through a lot of emotions and feelings and a pretty fun, crazy time," she said.

The fun, as we know, was quickly overtaken by dissatisfaction. Capriati was speaking some 10 miles from Coral Gables, where, in May 1994, she was found in possession of marijuana, and a short distance from Miami Beach, where she spent time in a drug rehabilitation centre after her arrest.

It is proving difficult for her to live those events down, but she appears to be making a determined effort. "You can't always look back at what you should have done or what would have been better," she said. "You've just got to live in the now."

When the Lipton Championships and here next weekend, Capriati will lose her classification as a teenager (her 20th birthday is on 29 March) and gain a world ranking for the first time in nearly two years.

In order to be placed in the top 100 after her third tournament since returning last month, Capriati must advance to the quarter-finals. She needs to defeat Elena Likhovtseva, ranked No 49, and, if successful, may then have to face Amanda Coetzer, the 10th seed. Further progress could lead to a meeting with Gabriela Sabatini, the No 4 seed, in the fourth round.

The first 20 minutes of Capriati's opening match against Lea Ghirardi-Rubbi, a French left-hander ranked No 86, left spectators as cold as the distinctly unseasonal Florida evening. The American lost the first five games, contributing 14 unforced errors to her oppo-

nent's confidence and winning only two points on serve.

After performing like a novice, mis-timing shots which were either dumped in the net or flew out of bounds, Capriati proceeded to thrall the Stadium Court crowd with powerful, penetrating tennis reminiscent of her advent on the professional tour, when she soared to No 6 in the world. She won 13 of the next 24 games to win 7-5, 6-1.

"I just told myself to stop missing and go for it," Capriati said. "I was a little nervous at first. I haven't been playing in front of a lot of people, and you can't just go right into that like it is nothing. It turned out to be good. I was having a great time out there, especially the way the crowd was supporting me."

"I never thought I was done with tennis. I knew that it was inside me and it is what I do best. There is nothing like ripping a backhand down the line."

There was a shock yesterday for Martina Hingis, the 15-year-old Swiss, seeded No 11, who was defeated 5-7, 6-1, 6-3 in the first round by Nana Miyagi, a Japanese qualifier ranked No 101.

In the men's singles, Britain's Tim Henman advanced to a second-round meeting with Sergi Bruguera, the 10th-seeded former French Open champion, with a 6-2, 6-1 win over Steve Campbell, an American ranked 80 places below him, at No 138.

Greg Rusedski also advanced to the second round with a 6-4, 7-6 win against Justin Gimelstrob, a wild card from New Jersey, ranked No 293. Rusedski now meets Sweden's Jonas Bjorkman, who is 10 places above him at No 35.

Boris Becker, the No 5 seed, withdrew from the tournament because of a respiratory infection which has troubled him for the past month. His place in the draw was taken by Thomas Nydahl, of Sweden, a "lucky loser" from the qualifying. Results, *Sporting Digest*, page 31

Feherty finds novel approach to bad greens

Golf
ANDY FARRELL
reports from Lisbon

A questionnaire at each tour event asks the players to comment on various aspects of the tournament. For the greens, they are asked to state whether their pace is slow, medium or fast. "All of the above," suggested one competitor in the Portuguese Open at Aveiro. "But not necessarily in that order."

"I'll deny saying it," David Fe-

herty said. The Irishman pitched in from 70 yards at the ninth to finish his second round at three under par, "there avoiding the embarrassment of trying to putt". At that moment, he was five behind the overnight leader, Klas Eriksson, who had yet to begin his round. "His eight under yesterday was extraordinary," Feherty added. "I can't see it happening again. If the wind keeps blowing, eight under could win."

Of course, in the afternoon, the wind dropped. Although

Eriksson faltered, Wayne Riley continued his good work. To his first round 65, the Australian added a 67 to reach 130 with a four-shot lead. In picking up six birdies, Riley is clearly doing something well. "I'm keeping the ball on the fairways," he explained.

To do so he is utilising the more conservative of his driving styles. That means hitting it around 255 yards, but straight. On a bigger course, he would launch a 275-yarder that would only be "relatively straight".

The Scottish Open champion has also been working to tighten his swing. Only last week, in Dubai, did he feel the improvement and he decided to make the trip to Portugal only last Saturday.

"If you hit fairways and greens, you are going to have some chances. I'm trying to pull the same as on good greens, but I'm not expecting as many to drop. I can't describe how bad the greens are. It is a shame, because it is such a good course otherwise," he said. Some things are better slept

on. Jamie Spence must have come close as anyone to dreaming good things about the putting surfaces after he holed a 15-foot birdie putt in the dark on Thursday evening. Had it not gone in, the Kent golfer would have played four over with five holes of his first round to play.

Yesterday, he picked up another two birdies in those five holes, before adding a second round of 66. Pride of place went to a putt from 30 feet at the second that dived underground. In 24 holes he had improved from

four over to four under, to be the joint leading Englishman with Russell Clayton.

PORTUGUESE OPEN (Lisbon) (Early second-round scores (68 or 69 or 70 or 71 or 72 or 73 or 74 or 75 or 76 or 77 or 78 or 79 or 80 or 81 or 82 or 83 or 84 or 85 or 86 or 87 or 88 or 89 or 90 or 91 or 92 or 93 or 94 or 95 or 96 or 97 or 98 or 99 or 100 or 101 or 102 or 103 or 104 or 105 or 106 or 107 or 108 or 109 or 110 or 111 or 112 or 113 or 114 or 115 or 116 or 117 or 118 or 119 or 120 or 121 or 122 or 123 or 124 or 125 or 126 or 127 or 128 or 129 or 130 or 131 or 132 or 133 or 134 or 135 or 136 or 137 or 138 or 139 or 140 or 141 or 142 or 143 or 144 or 145 or 146 or 147 or 148 or 149 or 150 or 151 or 152 or 153 or 154 or 155 or 156 or 157 or 158 or 159 or 160 or 161 or 162 or 163 or 164 or 165 or 166 or 167 or 168 or 169 or 170 or 171 or 172 or 173 or 174 or 175 or 176 or 177 or 178 or 179 or 180 or 181 or 182 or 183 or 184 or 185 or 186 or 187 or 188 or 189 or 190 or 191 or 192 or 193 or 194 or 195 or 196 or 197 or 198 or 199 or 200 or 201 or 202 or 203 or 204 or 205 or 206 or 207 or 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Cook hungry for a slice of the Wembley action

A Challenge Cup semi-final between Leeds and Bradford carries a guarantee of fierce local feeling, but for no one will it be a more intense experience than Paul Cook.

The Bradford Bulls' full-back and goal-kicker will line up at Huddersfield this afternoon, intent on blocking the way to Wembley for the regime that gave him his chance and then promptly discarded him a few months ago.

It has been a remarkable year for Cook, who is still only 19. At first, the arrival of Dean Bell and Hugh McGahan as Leeds' new management team seemed to have given him the opportunity he craved.

He was promoted to the first team ahead of more seasoned players, and performed so well that he was added to England's squad for the World Cup. No sooner was the ink dry on that entry in his CV, however, than Leeds had packed him off to Bradford in exchange for Carl Hall – a deal that caused some amazement both inside and outside Headingley.

"It came right out of the blue and I couldn't quite believe it at the time," he said. "There's still a bit of shock there but, on the other hand, I'm grateful to Dean and Hugh for giving me my chance. If it wasn't for the start they gave me, I wouldn't be anywhere near a Challenge

Cup semi-final at this stage in my career."

Cook still lives in Leeds and spends most evenings practising the skill that could bring his old club down on cocomy territory. "I like to practice kicking for an hour a day, if not at the club then out on a field in Leeds with my brother."

Important as his marksmanship could be in what promises to be a close match, it is Cook's all-round game that will be watched with the most interest as he develops over the next few years. The word from Headingley after the surprise of his departure was that the coaching staff had identified flaws in his technique, especially in defence.

Dave Hadfield talks to the Bradford full-back hoping to kick Leeds to defeat in today's Challenge Cup semi-final

If there is any truth in that assessment, Bradford's coaching staff believe they can straighten him out, through the medium of one-to-one technical sessions that were not part of the routine at Leeds.

"They think nothing here of spending a couple of hours working on your game individually with you," he says. "On top of that, the team spirit here is like nothing I've ever known."

If proving that they were wrong to let him go gives Cook one good reason to shine

against Leeds, then his personal Wembley history provides another. "I've been there four times – twice with Leeds and twice with England – each time as travelling reserve," he said. "It has been frustrating to go there and not get on to the field and this is my chance to put that right."

Bradford, as so often, have other former Leeds players in their squad. Paul Medley arrived via Halifax, almost seven years ago, while Jon Scates made the short journey from Headingley

last summer. Their coach, Brian Smith, might be happier if he could play another ex-Leeds man, the Cup-tied hooker, James Lowe, this afternoon, as well as another recent acquisition, Glen Tomlinson.

Even without them, there is an atmosphere of confidence at Odsal, Smith admits, however: "They beat us three times last season and have been to Wembley for the last two years. They have to be regarded as favourites."

Leeds have lost rather too many important players from their side to look entirely convincing. With Lowe, Craig Innes and Garry Schofield all departed and Tony Kemp

injured, they are threadbare in some departments.

George Mann can be surprisingly effective in stand-off, however, and if Kevin Iru is in the mood Bradford will be hard-pressed to stop them making it three Wembley visits in three years.

Clive Griffiths, the Wales coach and former assistant at Warrington, has been named as coach of the new club in south Wales. Mike Nicholas, the former Wales and Warrington forward who has set up the new club and plans to announce his playing squad soon, said that Griffiths had always been the first choice for the job.

An Australian court has



Cook: Still only 19 years old

granted a temporary injunction to stop Maurice Lindsay and the players so far signed to Super League setting up a competition of their own under the Global League banner. The full bench of the court will consider the matter further on Monday.

Second Division clubs split from NCA

England's Second Division clubs yesterday resigned en masse from the already emasculated National Clubs' Association, and in a move that may have profound significance threw in their lot with the First Division clubs, writes Steve Bale.

At a stroke they thereby created a still more powerful bloc within – or against, depending on how you view it – the Rugby Football Union as clubs and union confront each other about how the club game, which goes professional in just six weeks' time, is to be financed.

A meeting between the parties in London on Thursday, billed as the most important in this increasingly problematic process, reached no agreement other than to meet again next week. Such fundamental issues as contracts and broadcasting revenue still remain to be settled with the last resort being a breakaway, now involving the leading 20 clubs, from the RFU.

What with the mass of the RFU's membership exceeding 2,000 having their say at tomorrow's special general meeting in Birmingham, the forces of disunion in English rugby appear to be in the ascendancy at a time when Cliff Brittle, the grass-roots candidate who won the RFU executive chairmanship at the last, aborted SGM in January, has this very week publicly appealed for unity.

The NCA, which formerly had an important role in administering the Courage Championship while acting as a forum for the top 40 clubs, had already been rendered worthless by the resignation before Christmas of the First Division clubs, whose bargaining-power is now more powerful than ever.

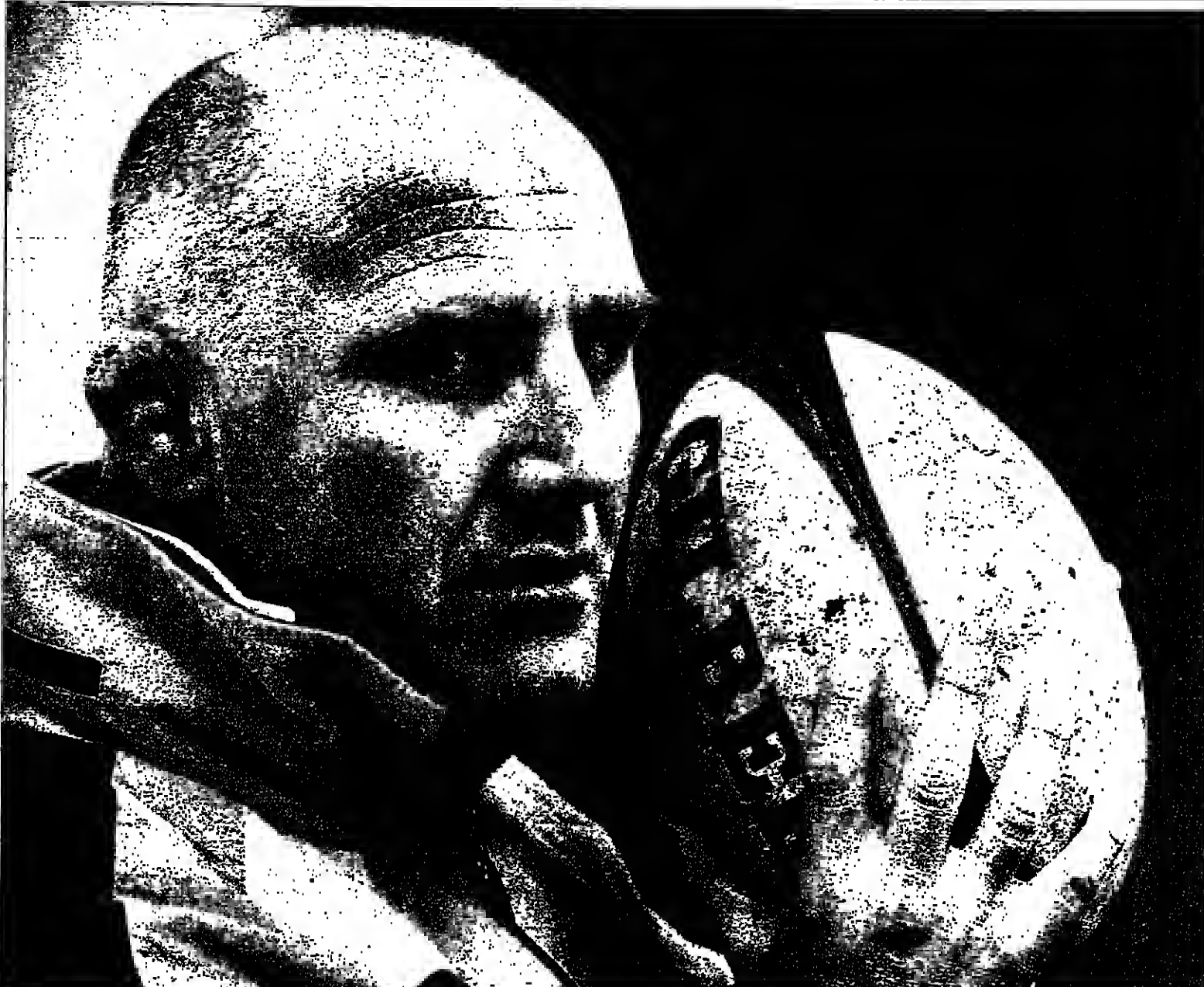
The Second Division clubs made their decision at a meeting at Moseley on Tuesday but agreed to defer any announcement until after Thursday's meeting with the RFU. They will now form their own organisation, parallel with the First Division's, and have a minority stake – two votes between them, to be cast by Sir John Hall of Newcastle and Steve O'Neill of Bedford, compared with the 10 First Division clubs' one each – in English Professional Clubs Ltd, the company formed to negotiate with broadcasters and sponsors.

Bristol, yesterday appointed the former England lock Mike Davis, best remembered as the 1980 Grand Slam coach, as assistant coach under the club's new coach and player-development director, Alan Davies, himself a former national coach with Wales.

TODAY'S NUMBER

3

The number of golfers who shot a hole in one at the same hole on the same day during a professional tournament in Soja, western Japan, yesterday. The hole so convincingly named was the par three 187yd 15th.



Garry Halpin has his sights on success in the First Division next season as well as winning a place on the Lions tour

Photograph: Robert Hallam

Halpin ready to reap his rewards

Steve Bale meets the London Irish captain who faces a twin test of his ambitions in the Pilkington Cup against Leicester today

The Irish semi-final has the corollary of showing Ireland what they have performed been missing, so much the better for his prospects of being recalled next season.

A curious thing is that Halpin, 30 last month, should have stepped aside at the very moment he appeared at long last to have secured the place at tight-head prop which was first his in 1990 when he was playing back home in Dublin for the Wanderers club before crossing the water in 1991. He has since accumulated only 10 caps but as the last three of those were during the 1995 World Cup he approached this season favoured as the man in possession.

It made no difference. "When I see Ireland playing at Twickenham, of course I would love to be playing," he said. "But I never doubted I did the right thing, both for me and for the club. The first thing was I was tired after the World Cup – I just didn't have the ambition – and coupled with that there was the captaincy of London Irish."

In this regard the impressive presence of Clive Woodward, the former Leicester and England centre, as club coach had

a powerful bearing. "I knew it was going to be a big and demanding job, and Clive does nothing half-heartedly; you do it totally committed or you're no good to him. I very much agree with, and believe in, that philosophy."

"Because of this, everything was very clear for me. I could foresee too much hassle between

"I never doubted I did the right thing, both for me and for the club"

London Irish and the Irish RFU about player-availability and I didn't want to be in the middle of that club-v-country thing, wondering what to do when the IRFU wanted to take me out of important games. If I, as captain, had to leave every time, it wouldn't work."

"I'm quite influential in our team. There are a lot of young guys who sort of look up to me, even if it's the first time in my

life anyone's done that. So I was making a statement that I had given up international rugby and this was the level of commitment I was willing to make for the club. They responded."

The result is second place in the Second Division, two points behind Northampton (who have two games in hand) and more relevantly two ahead of London Scottish with four to play and a vastly superior points-difference. This is why next Saturday's visit to Wakefield is of greater significance to Halpin and his team even than today's showcase occasion.

It is also why the semi-final worries Halpin and Woodward so. On the one hand, players' minds have been so fixed on, and nerves so tight about, Leicester that training has been adversely affected. On the other, players' minds are at the same time so fixed on the Wakefield match that the captain fears they may not do themselves justice today.

"If I had a choice, I would love to play this game after our league campaign. Its timing is appalling from a preparation point of view. We have what we know will be a very physical game this weekend and then

have to go to Wakefield next weekend for another physical game. It bugs me that it's happened this way, that we can't hype this game as we should, and our mental preparation could be a lot better."

The crowd approaching 7,000 who will fill Sunbury may beg to differ about relative significance but in any case the semi-final should provide the exiles – and Woodward and Halpin in particular – with a yardstick of what to expect next season and how far they will need to go in strengthening a promotion-winning team.

To this end an influx of Irish and sundry non-UK players is expected once the First Division has been attained, so on second thoughts perhaps today's exercise will not be such a yardstick after all. Whatever, by next season Halpin hopes (against hope) that the club-v-country issue, which has bedevilled London Irish's relationship with the Irish union, will have been resolved. Then he will be ready to restate his claim.

"I know I've had a chequered international career but I was always very aggrieved at the people they picked ahead of me. In the ability to play rugby I'm as good as anybody here and, internationally, I still have huge goals. I've taken my year out, I'm recharged, and I want to go on the Lions tour to South Africa next year."

"I may not have that many caps but the only other right head I would really regard in these islands is Darren Garforth and if I got a Lions tour, five or 50 caps for Ireland wouldn't matter a damn. The uncapped Garforth, as it happens, plays for Leicester against Halpin today, so you could say the Lions hunt starts here."

Leicester not a priority for London Irish

To London Irish of the English Second Division this afternoon falls a problem that has this season proved insoluble to all of the First Division, even Bath: how to stop the remorseless grinding march of Leicester's magnificent forwards, writes Steve Bale.

As this Pilkington Cup semi-final, even though it is on home turf at sold-out Sunbury, is down the list of Exile priorities, even the Irish themselves do not anticipate a solution. Amazing to relate, given the height of its profile, but this is a game they would just as soon not have to play.

Still, if they dispose of all 200 barrels of Guinness on order (one for every 35 people in attendance) the coffers will have been usefully swollen at a time when the Irish, expecting to join Leicester in the First Division, need every last punt, pound and penny in order to finance next season's new professionalism.

Even if they wanted to reach Twickenham to play the winners of Gloucester's visit to the holders, Bath, it would need more than advance knowledge of how Leicester will play. "If we get tunked at this stage, I wouldn't read too much into it because they've been tonking most teams all season," the Exiles' captain, Garry Halpin, said.

"There's nothing hugely special about it. They have a big pack that mashes everybody up. They take a couple of penalties. The opposition are then forced to try to play rugby, forced to make mistakes. Leicester score a try or two and get a big-margin win."

"It's very basic and they actually don't do a lot, but stopping their basics will be a huge problem." And so it will probably come to pass. Alas for the Irish, Dean Richards is fit to lead the league champions despite having failed to train this week – a state of affairs that generally suits the England No 8 very well.

In the other semi-final Bath's annual progress towards the double brings a return to the Rec for Richard Hill, scrum-half in so many of their triumphs but now Gloucester's coaching director. As he has been constantly reminded this week, for the first time since he first played at Bath for Exeter University he must remember to turn left into the visitors' dressing-room.

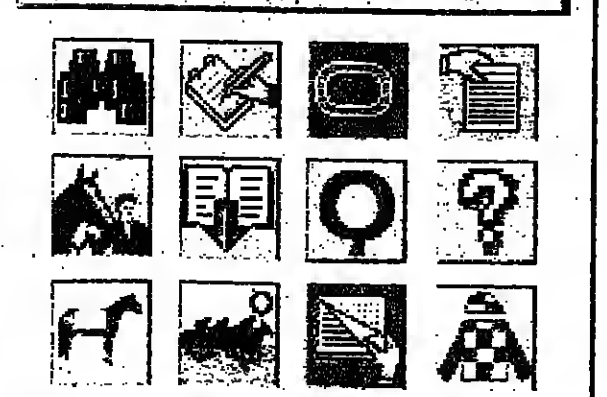
There is a poignancy here that comes not only from Hill's playing career but from his acrimonious departure from Bath, where he was chairman of selectors until in effect being frozen out of the club last September. His new team have the England A full-back, Mark Mapletoft, fit for the first time in a year – a return that may also do something about Gloucester's goal-kicking.

No such worries for Bath, who have been spared the embarrassment of deciding which of Mike Catt or Jonathan Callard to play at full-back by an injury to Richard Butland which leaves Catt no alternative but to revert to outside-half. "Jonathan lands those inevitable early penalties and gives the team the necessary cushion and confidence to play attacking, all-round rugby from the start," Phil de Glanville, the Bath captain, said. One wonders why, then, was he ever dropped?

It is Swalee Cup quarter-final day in Wales, with Cardiff's visit to Llanelli far and away the biggest tie – and in its way a reminder of the uncomfortable reality that these great clubs are no less disenchanted with the Welsh Rugby Union than the Baths and Leicesters are with their Rugby Football Union.

Unreality, meanwhile, will intrude when the RFU's special meeting in Birmingham tomorrow decides whether to permit the English game to go open. Hang on a minute, didn't that happen everywhere else last September?

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India are the big draw at Milton Keynes

ockey
LL COLWILL

The £9.5m National Stadium at Milton Keynes will open its international gates tomorrow as the England teams play at India's men and women.

The invitation to India, with series of Olympic medals

hitting rock bottom in the 1986 World Cup in London, when they finished 12th and last, they have clawed their way back and were last year playing in the elite Champions' Trophy in Berlin where they finished in fifth place – one place ahead of England.

Encounters with India of late have been very close, with the last four ending in draws. The most recent was 3-3 against Great Britain in the Olympic qualifier in Barcelona. The Indian team shows just two

changes to their Barcelona squad, one of which is their reserve goalkeeper, Ashu Ballal.

The captain, the 31-year-old Pargat Singh, from the Punjab Police, with over 200 international appearances, is their most experienced player while the centre-forward Dhanraj Pillay, who had a season in the National League with Indian Gymkhana, is their most exciting.

Unfortunately England are without four of their successful Barcelona squad. The captain

Jasoo Lasletti is recovering from a broken ankle, Simon Hazlett pulled a hamstring in Tuesday's Army Cup final, Russell Garcia, Barcelona's player-coach, has not been released by his Spanish club – and Rob Thompson is getting married today.

The Great Britain players have been excluded from the England women's squad which is captained by Jane Smith for the first time, but should be too strong for a French side lacking several familiar names.

Scotsmen reach final

Bowls

Scotland's Kenny Logan, Willie Wood and George Adrain will contest the first final of the World Bowls Championships in Adelaide tomorrow.

The only British team involved in the semi-finals produced a devastating display against South Africa's Theuns Fraser, Ashley van Winkel and Kevin Campbell to win 23-11, restricting their opponents to counting on just five of the 18 ends.

The Scots' final opponents will be New Zealand's Andrew Curran, David Fife, and Peter Bellis, who scraped home 18-17 against Australia's Ian Taylor, Kelvin Kirkow and Steve Anderson.

Today pairs semi-finals see the defending champions, Richard Corsie and Alex Marshall from Scotland, take on the home country's Cameron Curtis and Rex Johnson, while Ireland's Jeremy Henry and Sammy Allen meet the Welsh duo Will Thomas and Robert Weale.

SPORT

Illingworth to stay after rival withdraws

Cricket
JON CULLEY

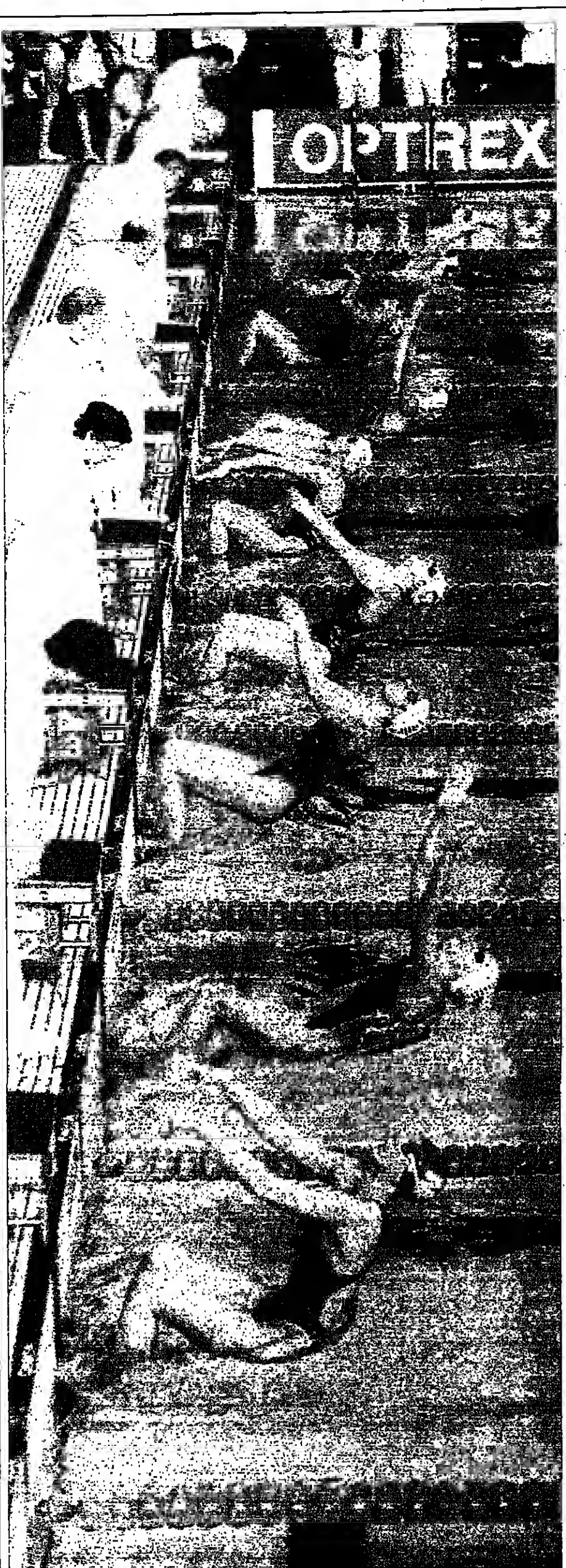
After the debacle of the World Cup, English cricket is suffering more embarrassment today after David Graveney's bid to oust Ray Illingworth as chairman of selectors ended in fiasco. The 43-year-old players' union leader withdrew his opposition to Illingworth little more than 24 hours after his nomination by Warwickshire and Surrey was confirmed by the Test and County Cricket Board. Ballot papers had been issued to the 18 first-class counties who, along with the MCC and Minor Counties, were to have delivered their verdict - effectively a vote of confidence in the current England regime - by Tuesday morning. That vote will now not be necessary, leaving Illingworth to continue unopposed as chairman for the forthcoming home series against India and Pakistan. Behind Graveney's withdrawal is the insistence of the Professional Cricketers' Association, for whom he is full-time general secretary, that he could not combine both roles, partially from a practical point of view but also taking into account possible conflicts of interest. It was on their instructions that he stood aside. Graveney, on holiday in Florida, clearly had to choose between the chance to reverse

English cricket's battered fortunes and the security of his existing paid post, aware that failure as Test supremo could leave him out of a job. The terseness of Graveney's reaction last night betrayed his disappointment at having to make the choice. "As a paid employee of the Professional Cricketers' Association, I accept the instruction of the president and the chairman," he said. "I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Warwickshire and Surrey for nominating me and any other counties who might have supported me. I apologise for any distress this decision may have caused. It has always been my wish to serve the game to the best of my ability and I shall continue to do this in the future." The Cricketers' Association supported Graveney's election as an England selector a year ago but clearly felt the chairmanship to be a position he could not combine with his union duties. Tim Curtis, the chairman supported by the president Jack Bannister, confirmed they had instructed Graveney to stand down, explaining that the association had given "further consideration to his nomination as chairman and decided that there would be unacceptable difficulties for the association". In particular, they foresaw problems over his representation of players in disciplinary matters and of having to address the me-

dia wearing different hats. He has only recently, for example, been advising Devon Malcolm over the TCCB disciplinary action set in motion in response to the Derbyshire bowler's comments about Illingworth made after the South Africa tour. The hierarchy at Lord's, who confirmed last night that Illingworth would stay on as chairman of selectors, can hardly be held responsible but this episode reflects little credit on the parties involved. It is an embarrassment to Graveney and his supporters, and to the Cricketers' Association, who knew nothing of the nomination until it was made public on Wednesday, by which time Graveney had outlined some plans he proposed to put forward, if successful. "I spoke to David about the matter for the first time only today," Curtis said last night. "Had we been able to talk earlier the Association would not have had to issue the kind of statements we have made today." There are deeper ramifications for the England management structure and for Illingworth. Straw polls indicated that the first-class counties were divided only 10-8 in favour of the Yorkshireman. Graveney having struck a chord with his plans for greater delegation of responsibilities and an emphasis on including current and recent players in the coaching set-up, Ian Botham and Mike Gatting among them.

COCA-COLA CUP FINAL

Brian Little: From cavalier to roundhead Page 30



Splashdown: A women's 200m backstroke heat at Sheffield yesterday. Jo Deakins, of City of Coventry, won the final in 2min 15.72sec Report, page 26. Photograph: David Ashdown

Cup final haunted by threat from Uefa

Football
GLENN MOORE

Tomorrow's Coca-Cola Cup winners could have the prize of a Uefa Cup place taken away from them before the end of the season. The action would hasten the end of the competition in its current format. The threat comes from Uefa, which is expected to remove the Football Association's right to offer a Uefa Cup place to the League Cup winners at its executive meeting on 19 April. Without such an incentive, many leading clubs can be expected to follow Manchester United's example and enter weakened teams. Restructuring of the competition would almost certainly follow. One FA official even went so far yesterday as to say privately: "We assume it will be the end of the competition". Although Chris Hull, of the Football League, said: "They cannot do that, it is an agreement between the FA and the League", the FA's Steve Double admitted: "It may be written on a tablet of stone, but Uefa could

cast it into the deep blue sea. The place is a gift from them." The principles of natural justice suggest this year's winners will qualify, but even if it does the prospect of the competition losing a Uefa Cup place after next season would inevitably lessen its prestige, and the League would find it hard to match Coca-Cola's current sponsorship deal, which expires at the end of next season. The FA has written to Uefa defending the status quo but an FA official admitted: "We are not terribly confident." The threat follows a misguided attempt by Uefa to reduce the size of the Premiership. It threatened to prevent countries with more than 18 teams in the top division (like England) allocating European places to league cup winners. Rather than cutting their division, however, Premier clubs reacted by welcoming the news. On the basis that it meant an extra place for a high Premiership finish. Premiership clubs are committed to entering the League Cup, which would prevent a return to the absenteeism of its early days. With gate receipts,

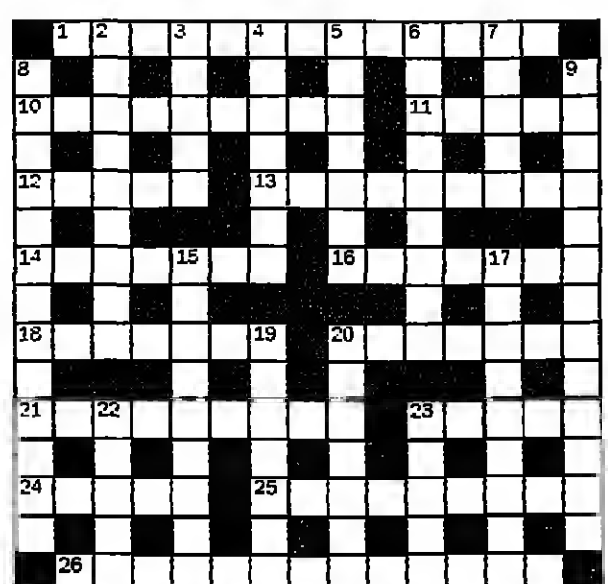
television income and prize money, the winners of tomorrow's final between Aston Villa and Leeds will gross £2m from the competition - much more than the FA Cup winners. Yet even that, in proportion to Sky's millions, is less significant. So, these days, is the Wembley date. Europe remains the real prize as Brian Little, Aston Villa's manager, underlined in midweek. When asked if the competition had grown in prestige he replied: "Definitely. A route into Europe means an awful lot to clubs like ourselves." This year, with the Premiership losing a European place because of the insipid approach to the Intertoto Cup, it means even more. As things stand there will be only five English entrants into the three European competitions next season. Hull said the League had "been assured the Uefa Cup place is safe for this season and next. We are confident it will be for years to come. Lennart Johansson (Uefa's president) recently suggested he did not care how many league games clubs played."

Flitcroft plans to catch peers

From Blackburn to England is how Gary Flitcroft mapped out his future yesterday, when he completed a £3.5m move from Manchester City. The 23-year-old midfielder, who signed a four-year contract with Rovers after being on the staff at Maine Road since he was 12, said: "I have watched some of the players I played with in the Under-21s go on to the full squad and perhaps I have sat back a bit. This is my chance to catch up." Roy Harford described his latest signing as "a complete midfield player" but not necessarily a straight replacement for David Barry, who was sold to Newcastle United for £3.75 at the beginning of the month. With less than a week to go to the deadline, Leicester were busy clearing the decks for new arrivals. Jimmy Willis, a defender, is to join Burnley for £125,000; the winger Lee Philpott agreed a £100,000 move to Blackpool; and the striker David Lowe may re-join Wigan for £125,000. Birmingham were rebuffed by Martin O'Connor yesterday after agreeing to pay Walsall £500,000 for the midfielder. Barry Fry did, however, offload three players, with midfielder Ian Richardson joining Notts County for £150,000, the former Everton midfielder Mark Ward going to Huddersfield on a free transfer, and Manchester City making Scott Hiley's loan move permanent for £200,000. Jan Molby continued his rebuilding at Swansea by paying Hull £50,000 for Linton Brown, a striker. Norwich City have dismissed, as speculation rumours that the Italian outfit, Genoa, are about to buy out chairman Robert Chase's stake in the Carrow Road club. EUROPEAN CUP Semi-finals: Ajax v Paris Saint-Germain (1st leg 21 April, 2nd leg 28 April); Juventus v Real Madrid (1st leg 21 April, 2nd leg 28 April). UEFA CUP Semi-finals: Borussia Dortmund v Barcelona (1st leg 21 April, 2nd leg 28 April); Feyenoord v Rapid Vienna (1st leg 21 April, 2nd leg 28 April). Final in Brussels on 8 May.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 2942. Saturday 23 March By Phil



- ACROSS**
- Don't show doctor greeting one mistress while embracing another one (4,1,4,4)
 - Shock tool used by locksmiths (9)
 - It's seen in painting, especially (5)
 - Extremes of the filthy dump get you readily annoyed (5)
 - Giving encouragement over that? I must be crazy! (9)
 - Ring and cross on Scot's University fellow? (7)
 - Is it initially located in the prickly plant? (7)
 - Large simple plant incorporates one process of fluid absorption (7)
 - Tarwell for ambassador attending Queen Elizabeth I in company (7)
 - Boy, girl and newsmen in the doghouse! (9)
 - Vulgar slut framing name in vulgar language (5)
 - Should drum be omitted from shortage of drinking material? (5)
 - Train coil to dance - we sing (9)
 - Luxury service to begin: dine with beaux in right surroundings (4,9)
- DOWN**
- A sudden flash, topped by the lightning in this? (9)
 - Spider-infested tree has very black interior, on reflection (5)
 - Mystical poet, one with expression of disgust, in the forefront (7)
 - Be a recipient of fashionable girl's sex-appeal (7)
 - Exclude Ordnance Survey line encircling island (9)
 - Little space given to University in Ulster due to lack of interest (5)
 - Fancy that being a question of expertise! (4,2,3,4)
 - Football fans' cry forebodes a win - things never change (4,2,2,5)
 - Who'll organise inert cops? (9)
 - Ultrapaen, wrongly prescribed, can be rough stuff (9)
 - Join cuner going mudd in edge of Pacific (7)
 - Former emperor almost capturing protectorate in noted display of prowess? (7)
 - Most of the liquor turns up after dark (5)
 - Content's missing from some spirit - it's just watery liquid (5)

Friday's solution
SILKSGREEN IDES
THE BURNING SAGO
I DO DO DO SWN
UGLY DOCKLING
D DE RENE
MARTHUANA LOGIC
P A L E A
TION OVERBURN
P N M R D R E
O N T E S T A M E N T
T R I T A K D I
E A N C O N G R E G A T E
N T R I T V L A N B
T A I N G P I N C H U S H I D I N

Last Saturday's solution
S P A U D I T O R I U M
P R I S O N E R S V I D E
E G R L T E
U N B E T T E R G A M B L E
N O D L E R
D O R A T I O P C O I L I N E
L T I N A N R N N
T I N E A S S A I L A N T
T H I N D I N F I R I N G

The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hardbacked copies of the excellent Chambers Biographical Dictionary, worth £35. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4918, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5BL. Please use the box number and postcode and give your own postcode. Last week's winners: Laura Bryant, Sheffield; M. Lucas, Glasgow; S. Smith, London; E14; Margaret Lake, London SW9; J.R. Browning, Edinburgh.

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In Monday's 24-page sports section

ENGLISH CRICKET IN PERSPECTIVE

THE MONDAY

THE MA

of the

modern

First in a four

Page 3

FOR SOME PEOPLE, UNWRAPPING A SWEET CAN BECOME A TASK...

...BEYOND ENDURANCE

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The Independent Weekend

The making of the modern girl

First in a four-part series
Page 3



THIS WEEKEND WHY NOT...

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■ Wigmore Hall, London W1 (0171-935 2141) Sat 3pm, Sun 4pm £9, £7

GO Snowboarding

The worst of the winter may have gone, but there's still plenty of the white stuff in Meribel in the French Alps, home of the week-long 1996 Playstation British Snowboard Championships beginning today. Drop everything and sample this cross between surfing, skateboarding, and skiing, the fastest-growing winter sport ever.
■ Crystal Holidays (0181-240 1100)

WATCH Quiz Show

Schindler's List made the teeth-graspingly photogenic Ralph Fiennes a Hollywood star. Mysteriously, many managed to miss his excellent performance in Robert Redford's criminally underrated *Quiz Show*. Now you can buy video proof that Hollywood doesn't have to be brainless or witless.
■ Touchstone, £12.99


TAKE The Plunge

Masks, fins, snorkels, boats and everything you wanted to know about sub-aqua diving is on display at the London International Dive Show. There's a try-out dive pool for the uninitiated and the chance to win a balmy learn-to-dive holiday for two in the Bahamas.
■ National Hall, Olympia, London (0171-370 8485)

REVISIT Music Hall

Elizabeth Mansfield is finally in the West End where she belongs. Her vivid incarnation of Marie Lloyd is a real star turn, drawing audiences into the feisty, frolicking world of the Queen of the Edwardian Music Hall. Infinitely preferable to a Sunday afternoon slopping around on the sofa.
■ Fortune Theatre, London WC2 (0171-836 2238) Sun 3.30pm

PICTURE STORY	2	BOOKS	11-13	COUNTRY	22	TV & RADIO	
THE MODERN GIRL	3	GARDENING	14	MOTORING	23		
SHOPPING	4-6	PROPERTY	15	MONEY	24-28	TODAY	32
ARTS	7-10	TRAVEL	16-21	GOING OUT	30	SUNDAY	31



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The boulevard of Jami-Mai-Wan was once Kabul's busiest commercial district. Years of shelling and gun battles between the rival mujahedin have disemboweled it. The area is heavily mined and full of unexploded shells, yet the Afghan children are so desperate for firewood that they are willing to risk their lives for a piece of timber



Having mastered a few steps on his new leg, after months of being hospital-ridden, this boy and a therapist share laughter at his success. In Kabul, relief workers have discovered that often the handicapped are the best teachers for each other



As the sun set over the devastated landscape of Kabul, this old man climbed to the rooftop of a bombed-out building to watch a child flying his homing pigeons above the ruins. Even in winter, the old man wears only sandals. "I have only enough money for food," he says. "If I buy socks what will I say to my children when their bowl is empty?"

HIGH COST, NO RETURN

Over the past 14 years of war, Afghan combatants have blasted away hundreds of millions of pounds in ammunition — and have killed over 25,000 civilians — trying to conquer Kabul. To an outsider, the prize may not seem worth it. Much of Kabul has been hammered into rubble. Winters bring famine, disease and more destruction. When an Islamic militia movement known as the Taliban appeared at Kabul's gates a year ago, many Afghans greeted them as liberators, come to free them from the anarchy and death brought on by the warring guerrilla factions. Today, the Taliban have proved themselves no better than any other mujahedin faction. They, too, have become part of the chaos. In trying to overthrow the unpopular Kabul regime, they have rocketed and bombed the poor families and refugees who are covering in the city's muddy ruins. Kabul's plight lies forgotten by all save the Afghans themselves and a few brave relief agencies.

Tom Pilston, who was yesterday named Nikon Feature Photographer of 1995, spent two weeks in Afghanistan capturing the story on film. Words by Tim McGirk



A teenage gunman faces the Taliban enemy, crouched in a ruined farmhouse just 200 yards away. The youth's best friend was killed the day before by a rocket. He's tired of war but knows that if he returns to his village the commander there will send him back to the front



Ghulam Sadiq, 12, stepped on a mine while out scavaging for firewood. Ghulam, whose foot was blown off, was carried into hospital by his saviour, a young militiaman, who gave 700ml of his own blood



Crippled by a landmine, a child is summoning her courage before a first go on an artificial limb. The Red Cross, which built the limb for the child, claims that fighting has left over 2 million physically disabled

the making
of the
modern girl

part 1

Daughters of the revolution

The Nineties miss has never had it so good. Or has she? In the first of a four-part series, Rosalind Miles discusses the pleasures and pressures of life for girls today

Amanda Hutt



Lips, even-knickers showing, hair and clothes flowing, she strides boldly out of the adverts down every street in the land, flounces off the pages of every woman's magazine and lords it over the late-night chat show set. By Calvin Klein out of Lady Chatterley, she is the triumph of Seventies feminism, the answer to Freud's 'great question': proof that women can have love and work. She is the modern miss, and she's never had it so good.

Or has she? History loves to flirt with the idea of female freedom, only to shove women back in the closet as soon as their hour is done. From the forging of the US frontier by Annie Oakley to the British Land Army of the Second World War, there is a "now-you-see-it, now-you-don't" quality to the New Girlhood that should give us pause. Much of the hullabaloo looks like sheer advertising hype. How much of what we see in the modern maid at play can be real, and how much is just another image-maker's device to foster the illusion of progress we have not had?

Some things have changed, for sure. This is the first generation of women in history not to make getting a man, marriage and a family their sole or primary goal. Figures from the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys show that the number of marriages has now slumped to its lowest for more than 50 years. The age at which women marry for the first time has risen steadily to almost 27, giving young women a decade of freedom from domesticity which most will put to the kind of personal or career development unthinkable in their mothers' day.

Today's young women also feel free to pick apart the traditional man/marriage/motherhood package, taking only the bits they want and happily discarding the rest. You want a man, but not marriage, dear? You live together, that's all.

Marriage, but not children? The 1995 survey *Hopes and Realities* by Guttmacher Research Institute showed that childbirth is falling world-wide, while figures from Britain indicate that around a fifth of today's under-21-year-old women will choose never to have children. You'd like a child but not a man, madam? We offer you the single-parent option. You'd rather not mess with a male to get pregnant? Have we got the technology for you?

Now that getting a man is no longer the main purpose of life from the age of 12 onwards, girls are free to concentrate on their schoolwork in an apparently bloodless revolution that has reversed another entire belief-system of the past. The faith in men's higher intelligence, used for centuries as the *raison d'être* of male dominance, has taken a terminal blow with this month's confirmation from the Chief Inspector of Schools and Head of the Office for Standards in Education that "girls outperform boys at 7, 11 and 14".

Girls are more successful than boys at every level in the GCSE, and are now achieving success in traditionally "male" subjects like design technology, computer studies and maths. We have female astronauts and ambassadors, female weight-lifters as well as weight-watchers, women sewage-workers, CEOs and priests. No wonder girls are walking tall.

And yet. All revolutions, all calls for freedom, all movements for equality have always stopped short of sexual equality. The undoubted progress that women have made has always been in the form of "two steps forward, one step back". The girls who are succeeding academically now are also becoming 5 per cent less fit than boys, warns Professor Neil Armstrong of Exeter University in a study presented to the Government last year, through the bias of the National Curriculum towards team games "for the lads". Over-protected

by parents, girls also walk and cycle far less than boys, with the result that some 13-year-olds have only the physical maturity of girls of 9, in the least fit female generation ever known.

Worse, the girls who slog so hard at school are still held back at degree level. The girls who so easily do better than boys at A-level are still only half as likely as the same boys to get Firsts or Upper Seconds at university. And the higher, the fewer. Ninety years since the first woman professor was appointed, only one professor in 20 is female. At the end of this, girls emerge into a world where even after 21 years of effort since the first equal opportunities and pay legislation in 1975, women are still only getting around two-thirds of what a man receives for the same work. And, of course, he still needs two-thirds more leisure time than a woman, so the unfair domestic burden will smoothly fall on our young girl's shoulders as in tradition.

With these eternal and apparently unchangeable sullen realities of worklife and home, no wonder the image of the New Girl striking out carelessly into the future has proved so seductive. The New Girl expects a job which she can turn into a career, and a salary to match. She wants her own place, a car, and the accoutrements that go with her life-style, she wants the freedom to travel and the fun of having sex when she wants it and not when she doesn't, along with the right to expect "a commitment" when she is ready. What she dangerously resembles is a complete inversion, almost a parody of the most dismal stereotype of manhood, the selfish, career-obsessed, dick-driven dork who only screws and bolts.

For all her flaunted femininity then, the Wonderbra, the searingly short skirts and fuck-me shoes, the New Girl is in fact a real lad in drag. Freedom for girls must not involve aping or taking men's, especially

when the men are making such a poor showing of the freedoms they have. So, far from being the stronger sex, now they have been forced from the strongholds of patriarchy men are failing in droves, as husbands, fathers, bread-winners, even as human survivors. Male suicide in the age-group 15-25 has tripled in the decades since 1950.

Today's young women have been robbed of the illusion of the powerful protector and provider. ("Prince Charming?" Angela Phillips imagines them saying, "Haven't seen him for ages"). Many now sturdily resolve to go it alone, in another eerie parody of a classic male obsession, the myth of heroic lone endeavour. This course is likely to be as difficult, dangerous and dysfunctional for most women as it always was for the desperados alone on the range. We do not win equality and fulfilment for women by re-enacting all men's mistakes. Men and women are designed by nature to share a world, and it is unreal for women to plan lives without men.

In deciding to do without men, today's girls are in effect punishing them for not being strong, capable, all we once hoped and believed they were and continually disappointed by failing to deliver. But to reject men as partners because they are biologically, socially, and intellectually weaker than women is another historical revolution with perhaps far more profound implications than those we have considered so far. Those days of devaluing the female are gone, but if our young women cannot consider sharing their lives with men – as husbands, partners or simply friends – then they are depriving themselves of the fullness of human experience, not merely condemning young men to the frozen wastes of alienation from which many do not return.

The "I'm all right, Jack" sparkly singu-

larity of today's young women holds another fear, too. Their growing-up has seen a virtual holocaust of marriage, the highest divorce rate this country has ever seen. Much of their go-it-alone thinking is seen as a triumph of feminism, the first wave of girls brought up by feminist mothers, born knowing that a woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle, and determined to go forth uncluttered to conquer the world. But many of their mothers were not victors but historical casualties of feminism, individually unable to profit from that great revolution in thought. Many of them raised their consciousness enough to leave their marriages, but not enough to stop them desperately and often unsuccessfully seeking another to take its place. They were also often too late or too unconfident to hit the newly opening career trail. They are the many bitterly discontented, divorced middle-aged women who have finished up with neither love nor work. The danger then is that today's girls are in fact living out mothers' resentments, not their own golden land-of-promise aspirations.

And all this does not even begin to tackle the intractable prospect of wanting to bring a child into a world of work that takes no account of the family needs of men, let alone those of the mothers of the future workers of the world. With the "having-it-all" formula looking more and more like "doing it all", it is clear that the modern girl still has it all to do before she can inherit the earth.

And yet. As I meet these bold, brilliant creatures who talk with such uncanny fluency, these cock-eyed optimists who take for granted what we have been trying to tell them for the past 20 years, I can't help thinking that if anyone can do it, they can.

The author is married with grown-up children. She is a contributing editor of *Cosmopolitan* magazine.

What kind of modern girl are you?

We invite female readers aged 13-18 to fill in our questionnaire - anonymously but honestly, please - and return it by Tuesday morning. We will report your answers in the final part of our series on Wednesday. State your year, age, the type of school/college you attend, and the town or area you live in in the space provided, and send your answers to: Making of the Modern Girl, Features Department, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL.

Have you ever asked a boy out on a date?
☐ yes ☐ no

How many sexual partners have you had?
☐ none
☐ less than five
☐ more than five

Do you drink alcohol?
☐ yes ☐ no
If yes, what and how often?

How many cigarettes do you smoke a day?

Have you tried drugs?
☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, which ones and how often?

How much pocket money do you get?

Do you earn any money?
☐ no
☐ less than £10 a week
☐ less than £20 a week

Is doing well at school important to you?
☐ not at all
☐ quite
☐ very

What career would you like?

Would you mind if your partner earned a lot less than you?
☐ yes ☐ no

Would you mind being unmarried at 40?
☐ yes ☐ no

Would you mind being childless?
☐ yes ☐ no

Which high-profile woman would you most like to be?

Age:
Type of school/college/job
Town/area where you live

NEXT WEEK IN THE MAKING OF THE MODERN GIRL

Girls at Redborne Upper-School and Community College in Ampthill, Bedfordshire, talk about how they see their place in the world



MONDAY
Sex, relationships and what boys are for
"It would be all right if I could set down the rules. I was saying to my Mum that I'd quite fancy a weekend boyfriend who didn't get in a mood or care if I didn't want to see him in the week."
Louise Wilson, 15



TUESDAY
How do girls get what they want?
"Girls are better at getting their own way than boys – boys give up so easily. If their first attempt fails, girls will keep trying. And they argue better – they know what to say at the right time."
Rachael Sanders, 13



WEDNESDAY
Where do we go from here?
"I've always imagined myself as a powerful career woman – but then I'll think 'Oh, who wants a career? Let's just have babies!' My Mum works, she loves her job but she comes home and she's tired."
Ruth Midway, 18

The fanatic's guide to factory shopping

Julie Aschkenazy meets Gill Cutress, guru of bargain hunters

Gill Cutress is addicted to bargain hunting. Yet the red sale stickers of high street shops do not tempt her. She prefers to go to the source: the factory shops. Over the past 10 years she made a career of visiting over 1,200 shops and has travelled more than a quarter of a million miles in search of the ultimate bargain.

It is in these (often well hidden) factory shops that manufacturers sell off samples, excess and returned items, ends-of-lines and those goods which fail to meet quality controls, to the general public. Shoppers can normally expect to save 30 per cent, sometimes 50 per cent on the high street prices and occasionally as much as 70 per cent which Gill describes "a bonus".

"I got into factory shopping by accident," she explains. "I had been transferred to Nottinghamshire

In my job and factory shops are a way of life there. I saw a sign for one and stopped the car out of curiosity. I didn't know what a factory shop was at that stage. I found a terrific range of items and bought myself a dressing gown at a very good price. I thought: 'I'll get a book about these shops.' It turned out that no such book existed.

Redundancy from work provided Gill with an opportunity to do some hard research and put together a publication. Thus the series of *Factory Shop Guides* was born.

I had pictured a home cottage industry and was rather surprised when I discovered the Factory Shop premises were smart Clapham Mews offices where Gill and her partner, Rolf Stricker, are helped by six part-timers. "It just snowballed. Rolf joined me after the first two years because I was in a state of collapse. We used to work from home but

we had computers in all the bedrooms and ended up having business meetings sitting on the edge of the bath. So we had to get premises. Everything is done in-house from research to publicity and approaching book shops.

By their nature, the shops are often situated in the back of beyond and publicity is patchy, to say the least. Some are happy to invite the public in, others are a little more sensitive as they don't want to alienate high street chains by making it obvious they are selling direct to the public at low prices. "The sensitivity is much reduced from when I started," says Gill. "In some cases it is still there. But factory shopping is different to high street shopping. High streets won't sell last season's colours or anything slightly flawed."

Although bargains range from pairs of socks upwards, the best savings can be had at the upper end of the spectrum. Designer wear,

curtains, carpets, furniture and jewellery are all excellent value. "I have had to be selective over the years. My best ever bargain to wear was a designer cashmere dress for £90 (the high street price was £450). My partner and I describe ourselves as walking rejects, everything we wear, huy for the house or put into the garden comes from a factory shop.

"One of the best buys for the house is carpeting. You may be spending several hundred pounds but at the same time you save hundreds. We bought an industrial-strength stair carpet for £40 which a hotel had commissioned. The factory was unable to stop the machines on the exact number of yards so there were overruns and remnants which we were able to snap up."

Another good reason for seeking out carpet factories is that, unlike at high street shops that have fixed stock, it is sometimes possible to become involved in the

production process. Some factory shops will oblige you by making unusual widths or dyeing to your own colour specification at no extra cost. Furniture, too, is a good buy because of the big outlay-big savings equation. Another bonus is that here, too, you can sometimes have a say over the finished product — the factory might be prepared to make a piece to a particular size or stain it to match your existing furniture.

Whether it's the thrill of the chase, the adrenalin that goes with rummaging in a bargain box of designer samples, or simply a day trip out for the family, such shopping can be a very variable experience. "I once got two letters in the same post bag about 'the same shop,'" says Gill. "One said the shop was very poor, the other said 'this is absolutely brilliant — I fixed up my 10 grand children with shirts and socks at unbelievably low prices!' Watch out, you could get hooked.



six of the best factory shops

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Carpets: Jorgus Carpets, Grimeford Mill,
Grimeford Lane, Anderton (01257 482636)

Knitwear: Alan Paine Knitwear-Ltd, Scots Country Store, Brighton Road, Godalming, Surrey (01483 419962).

Upholstery and curtain fabrics: Waterside Mill Shop, 359 Sheffield Road, Chesterfield, Derbyshire (01246 456886).

Glass and crystal: Caithness Glass Ltd, Visitor Centre, Inveralmond, Perth, (01738 637373).

Designer wear: Nicole Farhi and French Connection, 75-83 Fairfield Rd, London E3 (0181-981 3931 x203).

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
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A photograph of a building facade. A sign on the right side of the image reads "County Hotels". To the left of this sign, another sign is partially visible, showing the words "MOAT" and "HOUSE".

Purveyors of spiritually wholesome whole food

Caring, sharing and wholefoods: that's what life is about at Daily Bread, the Christian Co-operative. By Tony Kelly

Shopping and spirituality. The two words hardly trip off the tongue together. But in a warehouse on an industrial estate on the outskirts of Cambridge, a small group of Christians is trying to show that you can be a consumer with a conscience this Lent.

Walk into the Daily Bread Co-operative and you might think it was just another wholefood shop. There are no crosses on the walls; no religious music in the background (unless the staff happen to be engaged in their daily session of worship upstairs). Tempting displays of olives, nuts and honey sit alongside vegetables from a local organic farm. A coffee shop sells home-made cakes; a Traidcraft stall has Third World crafts. And then you notice, among the Indian earnings, a selection of "Christian witness Jewellery".

"We don't go out of our way to push our Christian approach," says manager Andrew Hibbert, who founded Daily Bread after working at its sister shop in Northampton. "We hope some of the atmosphere rubs off, but we want people to come because there's something worth coming for." And, indeed, it's worth coming here for the cheapest extra-virgin olive oil in Cambridge.

A manager? In a Christian co-op? It doesn't sound quite right. "It's important to have management in any business, but all decisions are taken democratically at a weekly meeting and the tasks are genuinely shared," says Mr Hibbert. One of his jobs, for example, is cleaning the toilets. "I enjoy doing things like packing lentils and not just sitting at a desk all day," he says.

What else does it mean to run a business according to Christian prin-



It's worth coming to Daily Bread for the cheapest extra-virgin olive oil in Cambridge

ciples? "We're working towards a tithe, giving 10 per cent of our annual wage bill to charity," says co-op member Gill Barker. A proportion of profits goes back each year to the developing countries from which much of the produce comes. "Staff are all paid the same - currently £8,820 a year. "We pay ourselves enough for our need but not for our greed," says Mr Hibbert. A leaflet, which is discreetly avail-

able to customers who take the trouble to look, makes the link with scripture: "... and they sold all their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as had any need" (Acts 2.45).

"I was at a conference of Christians In Business recently," says Mr Hibbert, "and I thought to myself 'we're a damned sight more Christian than all these people who call themselves Christians In Business just because

they work in business and go to church. Our whole business ethic is a Christian one".

In a room beside the shop, a group of people recovering from nervous breakdowns are packing mussels into bags. This is not just tokenism: they are paid the same wage as everyone else and can become full members of the co-op in due course. The long-term aim is for a 50-50 balance between "strong"

and "vulnerable" staff. There is no requirement for this second group to be Christians. "Religion and illness don't necessarily mix," says Andrew Hibbert, "and it's not right to say that you will help someone but only if he or she is a Christian".

Pam was one of the original Daily Bread workers when it opened in 1992: she is now in charge of packing and also works on the till. Both she and her husband suffer from depression and their daughter is in care. "Sometimes it's easier to give up than to keep going," she admits, but she has kept going for four years. She is now buying a house on the proceeds of her earnings.

Michael has been at Daily Bread for three months and is still on trial. "Working here has given me a purpose in life," he says. "I can go out and buy things for myself now - the other day I bought a CD and a bag for bringing my sandwiches to work." Few other businesses would risk employing people like Michael and Pam - it might not be economic.

That seems to fit with the Christian ethics. But what about the products - why concentrate on wholefoods? What is particularly Christian about brown rice and Bombay mix? "The sharing of food is a Christian thing to do; the Last Supper is an example of how to share good simple food together," says Mr Hibbert. "Wholefoods are basic foods and we sell them at a good price. By selling them in bulk we keep them cheap, save packaging and encourage people to buy in groups and share. Some of our customers get together for split-pea parties."

Daily Bread Co-operative, Kilmayne Close, Kings Hedges, Cambridge (01223 423177). Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Six of the best Soap dishes

1 Dary Rees Original, £33
Clear plastic soap dish inset with wire spirals and coloured glass beads. A bit eccentric but immensely stylish, although perhaps not very practical - sludgy soap gets trapped beneath its spirals. From Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge, London SW1.



2 Harrods Vine soap dish, £109
Made from resin with embedded gold leaf. Very ornate for those who think bath time is about decadence. And the price is decadent, too - if you're feeling rich this would make a good present for someone who already possesses all of life's necessities. From Harrods, Knightsbridge, London SW1.



3 Mac Products bath taps soap dish, £16
This soap dish comes in white fine bone china with a green illustration of a distinguished gentleman. One for those who like the look of Victorian memorabilia. From Selfridges, Oxford Street, London, W1.



4 Metal soap dish, £13.95
The upper tray has holes to drain away excess water on to the bottom tray. Very clinical: for those who like their bathrooms minimalist, modern and masculine. From Liberty, Regent Street, London, W1.



5 Heals, £19.95
You can't really go wrong with this blue-and-white soap dish - it's so simple and fresh. From Heals, 196 Tottenham Court Road, London W1 and 234 Kings Road, London SW3.



6 The Conran Shop, £6.95
A very good price for something that looks so stylish. Rests on three pronged feet and is very user friendly as the shape is perfect for scooping out slippery soap. From The Conran Shop, Michelin House, 81 Fulham Road, London SW3.



John Windsor

Stylist: Charlie Harrington

AUCTIONS

Innocent looking tiepins become bestsellers if their settings depict blood sports

Collectables with a touch of violence seem to appeal to the British. Innocent-looking tiepins, for example, not only have a reputation as quick-thrust spy weapons but become bestsellers if their gem settings depict blood sports. A collection of 135 of them, "property of a gentleman", at Sotheby's on Thursday (10.30am) has plenty of foxes, hounds, huntsmen and game. Four fox pins, decorated with rose diamonds and cabochon rubies for eyes, are estimated £400-£600. There are also jockeys, a motor car, a champagne bottle, a monkey, and two diamond airplanes cost £300-£400 the pair.

The earliest tiepins prevented the knots of 18th-century stocks (neck-scarves) and 19th-century cravats from unravelling. After the invention of the more stable Windsor knot they were used to pin tie to shirt, rescuing Victorian

and Edwardian clerics from their worst nightmare - accidentally trapping their tie in a drawer.

Sotheby's auctioneer Alexandra Rhodes, author of the definitive *Hatpins and Tiepins* (Lutterworth, 1982) points out that they also legitimised the 19th- and early 20th-century male's urge to wear jewellery. Tiepin fashions closely followed women's jewellery fashions - the 19th-century cameo, for example. Sixties psychedelic ties finally swamped them, but the London silversmith Hancock's reports that young men are buying them again.

And what sort of tribal art appeals most to the bloodthirsty British? Weapons, of course. At auctions strong in tribal weaponry, a surfeit of British bidders will push up the prices of even Fijian fishing spears from their usual £75 to £750 each. Non-belligerent carved wooden

figures can fetch astronomical prices, far higher than weapons - but it is the Americans, Belgians, Swiss, French and Germans who compete for them rather than Brits.

In Edwardian times, when London tribal art sales were dominated by the British, you could buy an early 19th-century Rarotongan figure for about £3 and a New Guinea wooden war shield for 15s - not that much difference in price. Now, Continental and American refinement of taste and greater buying power has pushed the price of Rarotongan figures up to £500,000, while New Guinea shields - mostly for the Brits - have stuck at £1,000-£1,500.

The Art of Africa exhibition at the Royal Academy did little to spur the British into buying tribal art. Unlike Paris, London still has no walk-in tribal art shop. Here,

the two or three dealer/collectors trade from home. The dominance of foreign money at London tribal art auctions became most visible in December, when a rail strike in France dissuaded American and Continental from including London in their traditional round trip. Takings at London tribal art auctions took a dive.

Among the more exotic offerings at Tuesday's tribal art sale at South Kensington (10.30am) is a pair of goose breast bristles from the Arcua Indians of Chile, estimated £200-£250 and a pair of Australian aborigine feather shoes (£600-£800). Australian collectors are expected to bid them up. Most rapidly rising prices are for the tribal art of South and East Africa. Wooden head-rests from there, worth £10-100 years ago, now sell for £300-£400 - due to racial reconciliation and guilt. Three antiquarian book col-

lections full of curios at Sotheby's Thursday and Friday (both 10.30am): Borneo, Napoleon and agriculture. Markham's "Masterpiece" of 1668 advising the smith, furrier and horse leech (£200-£250) shows that the 17th century furrier could teach his modern counterpart a thing or two.

Best of the rest: former trade union leader Clive Jenkins' collection of commemorative ceramics, Phillips, Monday (10am); collection of dogs and cats in art of Count Alarico Palmieri, Christie's Thursday (11am); Victorian pictures, Sotheby's Wednesday (11am), Christie's Friday (10.30am); modern Brits, Christie's South Ken, Thursday (10.30am); applied arts from 1880, Sotheby's Friday (10.30am).

Weekend breaks with THE INDEPENDENT

2 nights for the price of 1

Today is the final day of our offer where we are inviting you to take a weekend break and stay two nights for the price of one. In conjunction with Queens Moat Houses Hotels, our offer allows you to pay for one night's bed and breakfast and get the next night, including breakfast, free. Rates are based on two adults sharing a twin or double room and the only stipulation is that your weekend break must include a Saturday.

You can choose from 82 hotels located throughout the UK, ranging from country houses and cosy inns, to modern hotels in the heart of city centres. All are three or four star properties and many will allow you to enjoy a longer stay on the same basis, pay for two nights and stay for four, for example. You can check this when making your booking.

To add to our offer, children under sixteen can stay free when sharing a room with two adults, plus children under six can breakfast free. For those of you who are feeling energetic, many of the hotels offer a Body Club or Club Moat House Health and Fitness Centre which you are free to use.

Pictured here is The Falcon Hotel in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire. The Falcon is a magnificently preserved 16th Century timbered inn in the heart of Stratford-upon-Avon. It is close to all the sights associated with Shakespeare including the Royal Shakespeare Theatre. A double room for two people for two nights costs just £88.

Apart from the Royal Crescent Hotel, Bath and Billesley Manor near Stratford which are only available for stays Sunday-Thursday. Some hotels may be able to offer mid-week breaks on the same basis, please check when booking.



TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- The offer is valid until 5 May 1996. Some hotels will extend the offer until 26 July 1996, please check when making your booking.
- This offer is only valid based upon two people sharing a twin/double bedroom for a minimum of two consecutive nights accommodation including full national breakfast.
- All reservations are subject to availability and allocation of suitable bedrooms being available.
- Children under six years of age when sharing a room with two adults will stay and eat free for bed and national breakfast only. Children aged six to fifteen years when sharing a room with two adults will stay free and be charged £4 for national breakfast per child per day.
- Children accommodated in their own room will be charged the same independent rate as adults. No further discounts are applicable.
- Full payment, including extras, is to be settled prior to departure from your selected hotel.
- The offer is only valid when you book through QUEENS-LINE UK Reservations, 0545 113311, quoting "Independent Offer" at the time of booking. Lines are open 8 am - 6.30 pm weekdays, 9 am - 4.30 pm at weekends and Bank Holidays.
- Cancellations are to be notified to QUEENS-LINE UK Reservations as soon as possible and are accepted up to 4 pm on the proposed day of arrival.
- This offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer, or promotion and is not valid for special events, theatre breaks, half-board arrangements, luxury weekends or week-away programmes.
- Offers only apply if the hotel is managed by a company in the Queens Moat Houses Group at the time a reservation is made.
- Photocopies of tokens and the vouchers are unacceptable.
- The weekend break prizes are each worth up to a maximum of £394 and must be taken before 31 August 1996, subject to availability.

Weekend breaks

TOKEN 7

THE INDEPENDENT

HOW TO QUALIFY

To qualify for your 2 for 1 weekend break, you must collect four differently numbered tokens. Today we are printing our last token, Token 7. We are also printing another copy of the voucher (in case you missed Wednesday's), to which you should attach the four tokens you have collected.

HOW TO BOOK

For a Town & Country Classic Weekend Break brochure call 0541 543 500 quoting "Independent Offer". Once you have chosen your hotel call QUEENS-LINE UK Reservations on 0545 113311, quoting "Independent Offer". Your confirmation will then be sent out within 48 hours. Please remember to take your voucher and four differently numbered tokens to your hotel, they must be presented on arrival.

THE INDEPENDENT

Weekend Breaks
2 nights for the price of 1

Please present this voucher with your four differently numbered tokens, from The Independent/Independent on Sunday, on arrival at your hotel.

Affix your four tokens here

We can fantasise, but technological wizardry won't solve the problem of violence

When I was a small child I occasionally used to have a fantasy about a Universal Accountant. The occasions were invariably squabbles over equity – who had been more generous with their wine gums? Who had churlishly hoarded their Vimto while freely partaking of another's Cydrax? What was needed, I realised, was an Incontestable arbiter, a divine referee who would tally every tiny, unremembered act of exchange and deliver the bottom-line – the proof that I had been insufferably wronged and that my brother should hand over some Midget Gems at once. At the time I thought God was the best equipped for this task – because of his qualities of omnipresence and divine impartiality. But it isn't essentially a religious daydream

(the opposite, perhaps, given that it's a dream of crushing vindication). It is a dream of magic, of supernatural resolution to a humanly insoluble problem.

I was reminded of this by the recent public debate over the V-chip, a cheap electronic gizmo that can be programmed to exclude violent or sexual images from a domestic television. In a perfect demonstration of involuntary reflex – the fact that a sudden impact on the body politic will produce a convulsive action without conscious involvement of the brain – several people took the view that the massacre at Dunblane constituted a powerful argument for the V-chip. Among them was David Alton, the Liberal Democrat MP who called for legislation to make its installation compulsory

in all new sets. It was that old dream of magic again. "I wish, I wish, I wish we could stop children seeing these unpleasant things," thought Alton, and then the genie in the chip appeared to do his bidding. For just 60 pence, a messy, intractable human duty – that of schooling your children in the ugly ways of the world – could be waved away, as by a wand.

It wasn't the first time that technological wizardry has been called on to make problems disappear – electronic tagging had an equally childish appeal (literally, in that case, as the idea first appeared in a *Spiderman* comic). But it wasn't long before it became clear that the invisible prison was actually the Emperor's New Building. Nonetheless, those who support the V-chip talk of it as the perfect



THOMAS SUTCLIFFE

deal – a switch by means of which we can turn off moral corruption.

Naturally there is a catch, as in most bargains with genies. The objections to the V-chip proposal are fairly obvious. For one thing it has to be programmed to work, and it seems unlikely that the right people will bother. Smoke alarms are largely bought by middle-class, non-smoking home-owners, the sort of people who unplug the television before they go to bed and have furniture made out of

non-combustible hessian; smoke alarms are *not* big in the spending priorities of those who like to drift off to sleep on a petrochemical sofa with a can of Tennent's in one hand and a lit cigarette in the other. On a similar principle the V-chip will be employed principally by those who don't really need it, happily ignored by those who do. There are other problems – technology is notoriously turnable, particularly by bright teenagers in search of cheap kicks without all that tedious context. Besides, who will decide what constitutes a potentially deranging image? How will the V-chip's hidden controllers discriminate between *Titus Andronicus* and *Power Rangers*? Even if you support Mr Alton's aims, it must be clear that the V-chip won't advance them by a single inch – it is not a solution, just a devout wish for one bodied forth in silicon and plastic.

The knowledge hardly cancels the allure. Even though I believe that the only way V-chips could prevent a future Dunblane would be if you dropped a skipload of them on top of the potential psychopath, I can't quite stop myself toying with its magic, as you might fantasise about what you could do if you were invisible or, even better, were given three wishes by the bag-crone you have helped across the road.

I would like a V-chip myself for various reasons. First of all I would programme it to turn the sound down whenever the adverts appeared, so that I wasn't jarred by that sneaky nudge in volume; after that I might use it to remove

from documentaries all scenes in which the presenter travels down an American freeway while flicking through the local radio stations. I would do away with all appearances by Michael Howard, replacing him, as soon as technology permits, with an overlaid animation of Dick Dastardly, from whose mouth that creepy, rabble rousing would emerge in perfect synchronisation. I would ensure that no drama in which the characters said "We have to talk" would ever cast its flickering light over me again. I would arrange for a tasteful blue lozenge to mask the sight of Richard Branson's lower lip, whenever he appeared on screen. Wishful thinking can be quite enjoyable, you see, but it really shouldn't be mistaken for a sensible policy.

'I'd just like to thank my hairdresser...'

Monday is Oscar's night in LA. But florists, chauffeurs, trainers have been planning for weeks. By Daniel Jeffreys

Wednesday: there's mayhem in Charlie Horky's office. "I need 10 Rolls-Royces by Monday at noon," he screams down the phone. "You promised me 10. Don't screw me."

The handset hits its cradle with a crack and the owner of CLS Transportation moves on to the next problem. By midnight on Monday, his 100 limos will have made more than 500 trips with more than 200 gorgeous stars.

It's Oscar night, 23 March. The night to see and be seen, to fret about which parties are hot and whether the dress is too tight or the wrong shade of ivory. But whatever its excesses, Oscar night could not happen without Charlie the Car. For 12 years, his limousine service has been the biggest in Beverly Hills. Roseanne has been sick in the back of one of his limos. Toni Cruise and Nicole Kidman made out in the back of one of his Cadillacs. Horky is a vital cog in the Oscar machine, part of an unseen army.

"Everybody has to be in their seats by 5.30 LA time because the broadcast is geared to the East Coast, which is three hours ahead," Horky says. "It can take two hours to travel three miles – the traffic jams are unbelievable. I meet with the Los Angeles police months in advance to make sure all our drivers get through. I tell all our clients they must be off the road by 3.30pm."

Horky's limousines are supplied with champagne, vodka, beer, soda and water with ice. He also carries pantyhose. "Our most common crisis is snagged lights. We keep six shades in every car. It saved Demi Moore last year."

Salvation comes in many forms. In award week, LA's A-list hairdressers, dressmakers, personal trainers and chefs are all booked solid. "We have been fully booked on 25 March for five months. It will be crazy in here," says celebrity crimp Christopher. "I close on Oscar day," shrugs hair stylist Art Luna. "I just make house calls to clients like Annette Bening."

At Fred Hayman's Hollywood store, fashion consultants have been overwhelmed since February. "This year's fashions have much more colour," says Hayman's Ayre Gill. "Sharon Stone is leading the fashion pack – her Valentino gown is a knockout."

It had better be. All the big designers compete to dress the stars. After nominations, every contender gets letters of solicitation from Armani, Versace, Richard Tyler and on, down the list. No actress pays a penny; the designers all but beg to have their frocks on display. Calvin Klein has scored big: Sandra Bullock, Goldie Hawn and John Travolta will wear his label. Unfortunately, you can also expect to see men in some wacky, not to say tacky, styles.

"The tuxedo is being re-interpreted," says Patty Fox, the Academy's fashion consultant. One can only imagine. "There will be full-length jackets, indelible burgundy and liquid black material." Nice. At least the ladies will be spared embarrassment. "We consult with all the presenters and nominees," says Fox. "To make sure they don't turn up in the same dress." The horror, the horror.

Vera Wang is also hot. Mare Winigham, star of *Georgia*, will wear Wang, who has also made four gowns for nominees and presenters. "It takes us about a month and a half to design a dress," says Wang's Terry Robinson. "The final fitting is the night before. We tell our ladies to lay off the ice-cream until Tuesday morning."

Whoopi Goldberg will host the Oscars in Donna Karan, matched with diamond earrings and a diamond tennis bracelet worth more than one million dollars. "I asked Donna to make me something that can be comfortable for all that time I'm on stage," Goldberg says. "I do not need to be in a sheath dress with six-inch heels."

Fashion makes a statement, flowers say. Flower Fashions in the Beverly Wilshire Hotel (the place to stay and sold out for Oscar night since last November) took delivery of five tons of extra-large Ecuadorian roses this morning. "Lots of people send out flowers on Sunday, wishing people good luck," says Fred Gibbons, who used to get orders from President Kennedy every Oscar weekend to send white roses to Marilyn Monroe.

Sharon Stone was in here last week sending flowers to Martin Scorsese, he says. "We also send out more than 1,000 orders the day after, to all the winners and presenters. It's a little nutty, you might call it excessive. There's an atmosphere of one-upmanship. Last year we sent more than 100 different arrangements to Jessica Lange after she won Best Actress. When somebody wins, everybody wants to be their friend."

Some don't have the time to stop and smell the roses. "The moment the names are announced we get calls," says Jake at Body by Jake. "The women want to trim down in time. We have designed six special programmes combining diet and exercise that are varied to meet the size of the problem."

That can be vast. "Last year we had a big star. I can't say her name. She needed to lose 20lb in four days. We put her on the treadmill and fed her nothing but camomile tea." Jake's clients include John Travolta, Sharon Stone and Meryl Streep. "The Oscars are seen by more than one billion people; it's not the night to look flabby."

Or underdressed. Jeweller Harry Winston will make sure that every important actress at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion gets to shine like the star she is. "We meet with celebrity clients from January onwards, looking for the right styles," says Ed Callaghan at the Beverly Hills branch. "Big stones and settings are in this year."

Winston offers a great deal. His gems cost millions, but for Oscar night he lends them. "We think it is a privilege and an honour," says Callaghan. You bet, plus Harry must get a big kick out of purring over all those beautiful dames, who this year include Whoopi, Elisabeth Shue (*Leaving Las Vegas*, Best Actress), Susan Sarandon (*Dead Man Walking*, Best Actress), and our very own Emma (*Sense and Sensibility*, Best Actress and Best Screenplay).

"Miss Thompson will be wearing two-carat diamond earstuds in platinum," says Callaghan. "They retail for about \$200,000." Big money compared to Susan Sarandon, the tip money to win. "We have dressed her in sapphire-and-diamond bracelets with earrings to match." Price? "Oh, probably around \$1.5m."

Those who don't get invited to borrow Winston's gems have to find their own. Competition to get on his list can equal the fight for an Oscar. "Actresses have been upset," says Callaghan. "That's an understatement. One famous English actress once screamed abuse at employees for half an hour after she had not been asked to flaunt Harry's rocks."

The jewels are important, not just because of the awards; they also come in handy at the post-Oscar parties. The granddaddy, the Governors Ball, is held next to the Academy auditorium. Some of the 2,000 extra security guards hired every year will funnel the newly crowned royalty of film into an extravaganza that entered its planning stage 10 months ago.

"This year will be the most fabulous ever," says David Corwin of the aptly named Ambrosia productions. "There will be 160 tables for 1,600 guests. The centrepiece will be 5ft high with French tulips, roses in jewelled tones and green fern. The food will be prepared by more than 50 chefs."



Imagine you have just won an Oscar. You trip lightly down darkened corridors past some of the 1,200 members of the Awards' audience who don't have a ball ticket. You then enter Corwin's creation. Forty-one thousand square feet of canvas stretch the length of a football field. It has been artfully decorated with Lycra and Spandex screens to give the impression of a cathedral complete with flying buttresses.

Lighting makes the ceiling look a deep blue, like the night sky. From above hang chandeliers, each one weighing more than 1,000lb and incorporating hand-blown glass sculptures. You sit at your table and eat free-range veal followed by Oscar's favourite chocolate cake with wild berries. You are in heaven.

"The setting will cost millions of dollars," says Corwin. "Nothing like it will have been seen before. Sadly, few members of the movie-going public will get a glimpse. Cameras are forbidden – if the stars try to bring their own they will be confiscated."

The dedicated star has to make all the big parties. Miramax, with 11 nominations for *Il Postino* and *Georgia*, will hold its party in Spago's, where the legendary agent "Swift" Lazar used to hold court. After his death, the award for Best Party became an open race. The Miramax bash will be jostling with *Vanity Fair's*

do at Morton's, the ultimate Hollywood power restaurant. Wolfgang Puck, Spago's innovative chef, is also making his duck pizzas for the Governors' Ball and has hired two helicopters to shuttle him between the two. He expects to make the journey at least four times.

"Getting the guest list right is so important," says Beth Kesiak, the *Vanity Fair* organiser. "We have had screaming matches. Last year one actress was turned away at the door holding her Oscar because a young assistant didn't recognise her. But it's a wonderful evening, nothing is overdone." Surely she jests? "I mean, I'm from New York and, yes, the people are overdone, but everything else is subtle."

Meanwhile, Emma Thompson will be fêted by Columbia at Drai's. "We have been badgered by tickets by BBC people for weeks," moans Drai's Adam Gordon. "I'm up to my ears in the BBC. Frankly, I have better things to do."

Army Archerd has covered the Oscars for *Variety* since 1972. "There is no one party that is the best any more," he sighs. "The party to be at will be the one for whoever wins."

The only people who know the winners now are Frank Johnson and Greg Garrison of Price Waterhouse. This weekend the names of this year's Best this and Best that sit in a downtown bank vault. Come Monday, Johnson and Gar-

risson will take their own copies of the envelopes and place them in briefcases chained to their wrists. Then they get into separate limousines which will take different routes to the ceremony.

The show will be produced this year by the record producer Quincy Jones, who also did the honours in 1994. He began rehearsals six weeks ago. "The show is a daunting logistical problem," says Jones. "We have 22 cameras inside and three outside to make sure we get all the reactions from the nominees." All this week, cardboard cut-outs of the nominees have been placed in their designated seats and 36 actors have been hired to give phoney acceptance speeches (insiders say these are usually better than the real thing).

Fifty Oscars will be distributed in over four hours; each one took five hours to make by a hand-casting method first used in 1929. And each one is engraved with a serial number and will arrive inside an armoured car. "Once all the parties are over, this is what the winners have left," says Owen Siegel, who owns RS Owen, the Oscar manufacturer since 1983. "The flowers die. The hair falls down. The dresses go out of fashion. Nobody really recalls the parties. But when they wake up, there it is – the most famous trophy on the planet. I think that's the moment every winner always, always remembers."

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Confessions of a Worcestershire lad

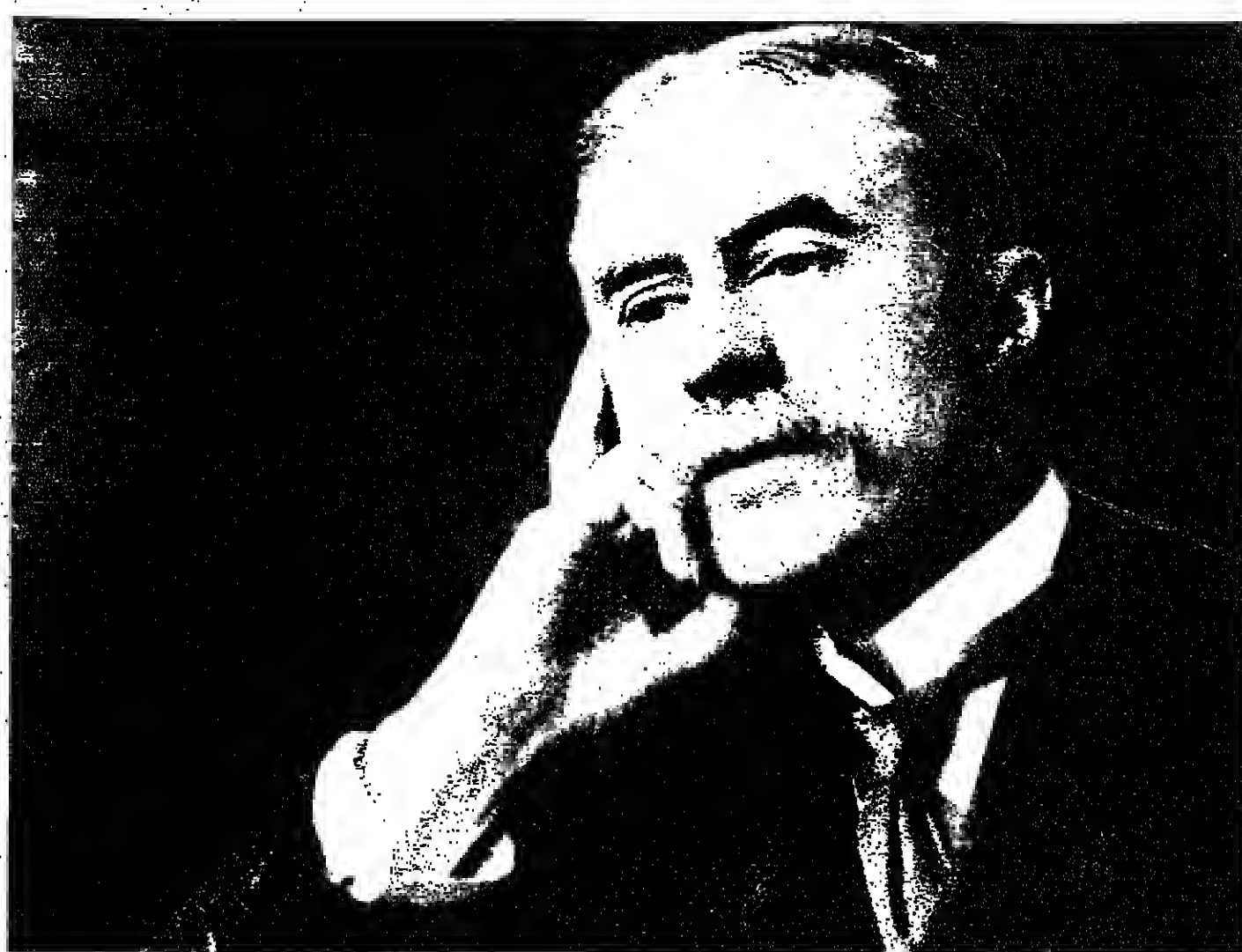
This month marks the centenary of the publication of Housman's 'A Shropshire Lad'. Here, Peter Parker re-evaluates its stoical creator

One hundred years ago this month a small volume of poems was published by Kegan Paul in an edition of 500 copies at half-a-crown each. The author, a 37-year-old professor of Latin at University College London called Alfred Edward Housman, had been obliged to pay £10 towards the cost of publication. A small, slow trickle of reviews was led by the *Times*, which, in a round-up of "Books of the Week" on 27 March, noted that: "Mr Housman has a true sense of the sweetness of country life and of its tragedies too, and his gift of melodious expression is genuine."

Other reviewers were less faint in their praise, but there is little in their pronouncements to suggest that *A Shropshire Lad* would become, and remain, one of the best-loved volumes of poetry in the language. By the end of the year, its combined sales in Britain and the US amounted to only 381 copies. The first edition did not sell out until two years later, and only then because Housman's brother Laurence (also a poet) bought up the remaining copies. "So Alfred has a heart after all," a member of his family remarked after reading the book. Indeed he had, and he lost it to a man called Moses Jackson, with whom he had been at Oxford and later shared rooms in London. The majority of Housman's poems most directly concerned with this one-sided love affair were published in later volumes, but *A Shropshire Lad* is suffused with barely repressed longing for "lads" who (like Jackson) were more interested in "lasses" than in Latinists. This submerged background to the book may have been recognised by sympathetic homosexual readers, but it would hardly commend the poems to the general public, or explain why they became part of the fabric of the twentieth century.

The growth in popularity of the book was most marked during the early years of the century: in 1905 it sold 886 copies; by 1911 the average yearly sale was 13,500 copies. Sales were undoubtedly boosted by the large number of composers who made settings from Housman's poems during this period, which had seen a renaissance in British music and a rediscovery of traditional folksong. Housman deplored these settings, but never actually prevented them; indeed, his refusal to accept payment may have actively encouraged composers. Among the settings, either individually or as song cycles, are ones by Arthur Somervell (1904), Balfour Gardiner (1906), Ivor Gurney (1908), Ralph Vaughan Williams (1909), George Peel (1910) and George Butterworth (1911 and 1912). Later songs include those by John Ireland (1917), E.J. Moran (1920), Arnold Bax (1920) and C.W. Orr (1934). Although the poet did his best to avoid hearing any of them, several are very fine indeed and a number of recordings are still in the catalogue.

Few of these composers knew, or were specifically celebrating, Shropshire: Housman's adopted county had become representative of an idealised rural England. The drift away from the countryside towards the industrial towns and cities was such that, by 1911, under 22 per



City slicker: AE Housman wrote the entire volume while living in Hampstead

cent of the population lived in rural areas; but for many people, the word "England" still conjured up a vague landscape of the sort depicted in Housman's verse, and in the poetry of the Georgians, which also flourished at this period. For many people, it still does.

In search of Housman's "far country", however, thousands of pilgrims have followed E. M. Forster, who in 1907 went on a *Shropshire Lad* walking tour, noting landmarks made familiar by the poems: Ludlow, Wenlock Edge, Hughley Steeple, "Severn shore" and the "high vane" of Shrewsbury. Housman actually wrote the entire volume in Hampstead, and chose most of the place-names for their euphonious qualities.

A Worcestershire lad, he had spent his childhood on the outskirts of Bromsgrove. (The first line of one of his best-loved poems originally ran: "This time, I think, by Stourbridge town...") "I had a sentimental feeling for Shropshire," he explained, "because its hills

were our western horizon." That horizon was immortalised in his most famous poem ("Into my heart an air that kills") as the "blue remembered hills" that mark "the land of lost content", and it is phrases such as these, rather than topographical reference points, that lodge in the mind. The fact that, for instance, the church at Hughley, far from being a "far-known sign", is buried in a valley does not in the end matter to readers – or to tourist boards who need to entice people to "Housman Country". The poet reached a geographical compromise in death: his ashes were buried in Ludlow, but in leaf-mould imported from his childhood home in Worcestershire.

By 1914 *A Shropshire Lad* entered the nation's bloodstream, and Housman's vision of "lads that will die in their glory and never be old" was about to be very thoroughly fulfilled. Many of the poems feature doomed youths, and some of them are in uniform. "Soldiers marching, all to die". Discovered in the classroom,

these verses provided models for the soldier-poets of the First World War, and we find both Rupert Brooke and C.H. Sorley delivering lectures on the poems to their schools' literary societies. In 1913 Brooke declared Housman as "the only true poet in England", while Sorley's much-anthologised "All the hills and vales along" echoes *A Shropshire Lad* in its ironically jaunty defiance.

The descendants of Housman's ploughboys-turned-soldiers populate the poetry of Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon, both of whom shared their predecessor's romantic compassion for "lovely lads" soon to be "dead and rotten". A special miniature wartime edition of the book was produced, designed to be slipped into the breast pocket of uniforms, where Housman fondly hoped it might one day deflect one of the bullets which (as Owen put it in a Housmanic phrase) "long to nuzzle in the hearts of lads". There is no record of this happening, although one of the war's most

famous poems, Patrick Shaw-Stewart's untitled verses beginning "I saw a man this morning / Who did not wish to die", was first scribbled by the author on the flyleaf of Housman's book. The *Times* printed some of the poems on a broadsheet to be distributed in the trenches and by 1918 the book itself was selling some 16,000 copies a year, despite the fact that it had doubled in price.

"My chief object in publishing my verses was to give pleasure to a few young men here and there," Housman once said. In this he undoubtedly succeeded, and many of those young men went on to be writers, thus extending Housman's influence well beyond the First World War. "To my generation, no other English poet seemed so perfectly to express the sensibility of the male adolescent," wrote W.H. Auden, several of whose early poems are modelled on Housman's. The volume's mood of romantic melancholy, its railing against the injustices of life, naturally appeals to the young, and it is in adolescence that poetry strikes home most forcefully, even among those who may never read poetry thereafter.

Boys of Auden's generation, who spent hours in the classroom studying Greek and Latin literature, were familiar, as Cyril Connolly put it, with "love and death and the fate of youth and beauty". Furthermore, Housman's language – although occasionally archaic – is straightforward, his rhythms strong, and all this adds up to a poetry of deceptive simplicity, appealing to the senses as much as the intellect. John Betjeman praised (and imitated) its "recitability", and Connolly's fellow-Etonian, George Orwell, claimed to have the entire volume by heart – although, like Connolly, he later grew disenchanted. Others didn't, and Connolly's brutal reassessment in the *New Statesman* shortly after Housman's death in 1936 caused howls of outrage. Housman continued to haunt later generations: Kingsley Amis's poem "A.E.H." is an affectionate and moving pastiche, while the work of Philip Larkin has obvious affinities of tone.

It was Larkin who observed that "Housman is the poet of unhappiness: no one else has reiterated his single message so plangently. Housman's evocation of loss – the loss of love, of youth, of life – strikes a chord with most people. While the poet's redcoats, ploughboys and 'rose-lipped maidens' have long since come to dust, the feelings that animated them remain."

"I think that to transmute emotion – not to transmit thought but to set up in the reader's sense a vibration corresponding to what was felt by the writer – is the peculiar function of poetry," Housman said in a lecture. Even if we do not suffer from unrequited love, we all have our lands of lost content, and you don't need to know Shropshire or know about Moses Jackson to respond to this poetry. Housman's Shropshire was a landscape of the imagination, his hook a gazetteer of the heart. Although occasionally clumsy and even absurd, *A Shropshire Lad* does what good literature should do: it transforms the personal and specific into something universal.

A charge into the footnotes of history

The Great War changed warfare and the military for ever. Jan Morris feels a pang for the passing of the cavalry

In March 1914 the officers of the British Third Cavalry Brigade, stationed at the Curragh in Ireland, put paid to Herbert Asquith's Irish Home Rule Bill by making it clear that they would never go into action against the militant Unionists of Ulster. They doubtless agreed with their commanding general, Sir Arthur Paget, that they would not take orders from "those swines of politicians", only from His Majesty the King.

This fateful insubordination was perhaps the last decisive intervention of the equestrian classes in British history – the last insolent gesture of the knights who had for so many centuries clanked and jangled their lordly way through the nation's affairs. It opens this penultimate volume of Lord Anglesey's *History of the British Cavalry*, which also covers the first six months of the Great War, and it gives the whole book an allegorical tinge. The horsed patricians and their retainers were entering their last decade, and never again would hussars, dragoons and lancers be able to exert such moral pressure as they did at the Curragh that spring.

Nor, for that matter, would they exert decisive military pressure. At the fulcrum of the war which was so soon to break out, the cavalry would play a smaller role than in any previous great conflict. It is symbolically as well as militarily true that the last lance-to-lance charge ever made by British cavalry, by the 9th Lancers at Moncel in September 1914, was in Anglesey's words "thoroughly ineffective" (even though the 9th were led by Lieutenant-Colonel David Campbell, who had won the Grand National on The Soarer in 1896...)

This is the seventh volume of Lord Anglesey's magnificent history, and by the nature of things it is the palest. Once we are out of Ireland, into the early battlefields of the Great War, little that happens is central to great events. The cavalry formed a minor part of the British Army in France, and the British themselves, in November 1914, held only 21 miles of the western front compared with 430 miles held by the French.

A History of the British Cavalry
by The Marquess of Anglesey
Leo Cooper, £35.00

Lord Anglesey has stuck to his role as a chronicler specifically of the cavalry, giving us only the sketchiest outlines of general strategy. In recalling the opening months of the war – the first German advances, the retreat from Mons, the battle of the Marne, Joffre's great offensive – he is often reduced to blow-by-blow descriptions of skirmishes almost unnoticeable in a wider view of the conflict.

Not that the British cavalry was insignificant. It was undoubtedly the best in Europe at that time, having learnt much from its experiences in the Boer war – notably the skilful use of the rifle in dismounted combat. General Allenby indeed thought his Cavalry Corps "the best-trained officers and men that had ever taken the field in European war". If they were sometimes timidly used by the higher command (though certainly no more timidly than the German cavalry), they seem to have fought their petty actions with all their legendary flair – the "View-Halloo" spirit, brought from Galway or the shires to these more awful fields of death.

The author assures us that the cavalry action fought at Nery in September 1914, together with other generally forgotten small battles, was crucial to the entire Allied resistance in France – even, in the long run, to the conclusion of the war. Nevertheless the interest of his book lies far more in its detail than in its surmises. Throughout his immense task he has always liked to call himself an amateur, and although his volumes are scrupulously scholarly, equipped with the full apparatus of historical research, endlessly patient in their listing of units and movements, still it is his exuberant love of the subject that gives the work its unique charm.

Some of his anecdotes, it is true, seem rather less hilarious today than



'The last lance-to-lance charge of the cavalry': the charge of the 9th Lancers at Moncel in 1914

they probably did in 1914, but the book is fascinatingly full of asides, cross-references and allusions. Here are a few:

- The 20th Hussars, having no spades, dug their trenches with broken plates, mess tins, knives and forks.
- The Royal Dragoons were mounted on Basuto ponies they had brought from South Africa.
- Light-coloured horses were camouflaged with potash dye, applied with whitewash brushes.
- Sergeant Smeltzer of the 12th Lancers was given a commission: within two years he commanded an infantry battalion and had won a DSO and bar and an MC.
- The Queen's Own Oxfordshire Hussars were variously known as "The Agricultural Cavalry" or "Queer Objects On Horseback".

Cavalry officers sometimes relied on maps torn out of railway timetables, and spell place-names phonetically because they knew them only from the replies of local people.

• The Northumberland Hussars Yeomanry were also known as "The Noodles".

• Brigadier-General Richard Lucas Mullen was known as "Gobby Chops".

• That's the way to serve them bastards," said Trooper Bellingham of the 1st Life Guards, having run a surrendering German through with his sword (he wiped the blood off on his horse's mane).

But for me it is the allegory that means most. All over Europe the cavalry was about to die, and with it the last remnants of feudalism, as of chivalry. The grey-cloaked German Uhlands, the French Cuirassiers in

their plumed helmets, the English huntsmen with their high spirits and nicknames – all were relics of a soon-to-be-lost society, and it is no coincidence that German and British cavalry regiments sometimes shared the same Colonels-in-chief – kings, queens and princes from the doomed hierarchy of Europe.

Within a generation, most of the kings and queens would be gone, and so would the horses that were the ancient emblems of nobility. The proud old regiments would be trundling about in tanks, and Gobby Chops, The Noodles and the Agricultural Cavalry, even the Third Cavalry Brigade at the Curragh, would be hardly more than curious footnotes of history.

Only those swine, the politicians, would ride on regardless.

A WEEK IN BOOKS

Forget the London Book Fair. Keener joys were to be had at the Publishers' Association Centenary Conference writes Richard Tyrell. This offered the sight of angst-laden publishers wondering if they should be training their reps to sell CD-Roms rather than books. They all rather missed the point.

The point was the decline of the novel and this was the topic of George Steiner's keynote address. Steiner cited a newly-discovered papyrus from the fifth-century: a critical work predicting that Homer's *Odyssey* had no future (too long, too repetitive, all those row-fingered dawns). But he also bore within him a warning from his Engineering colleagues at Cambridge. They are, he said, very close to inventing a small-scale display unit – a screen that imitates a page, clearly printed. Their units could give you access to all 14 million items in the Library of Congress. You can turn any of its pages at any speed. It's easy to carry, more responsive than any book, and just a few years away.

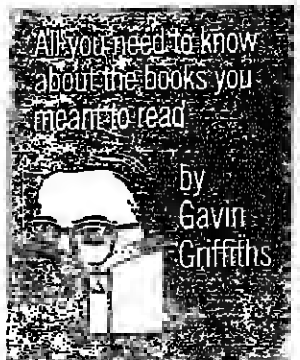
So what hope for traditional publishing or fiction? The novel has already been written off by none other than VS Naipaul, who said in the *Observer* last month that it began to flag after 1895. And Gilbert Adair has written of today's novelists being "tailures" in comparison to the standards of Stendhal. Steiner added his voice to these distinguished writers, but there was a quiet air of subversion at the conference. Brenda Maddox, the journalist, pointed out that the IT revolution might bring new art forms, but these would take their place alongside novels, film and painting. The clincher came from Matthew Evans of Faber, who forecast that readers would simply print out texts they wanted to read – ie put them back on a page.

So finally we're down to the bottom line – who on earth wants to read books by computer? Only a masochist would sit staring at *Sense and Sensibility* on PC. The development of taste for literature presupposes the book, and once you have a taste for literature you will want to buy novels, and writers will want to write them.

Steiner fears, of course, that the young will not develop such tastes. But this reminds me of the poet Richard Hugo, who in his last years wrote a poem giving exact instructions for his funeral in the hope that by exaggerating the event he might lessen his fear of it.

The funeral of the novel is far less certain. The safest prediction is that readers will use the witty new technology as an aide-de-camp for novels and art galleries, not as a surrogate. And books will always have one huge advantage over expensive portable technology: nobody will mug you in the subway saying "Hand over the Dickens or else..."

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ANDROMACHE (1667)
by Jean Racine

Plot: Pyrrhus, King of Epirus is betrothed to Hermione, daughter of Menelaus, but loves Andromache, widow of the Trojan hero Hector. Orestes, sent by the Greeks to kill Andromache's son, is in love with Hermione. Pyrrhus blackmails Andromache: either she marries him or her son Astyanax is handed over to Orestes for execution. Under pressure Andromache agrees to the marriage, but having secured her son's safety will kill herself. Hermione meanwhile learns of Pyrrhus's plans to marry and is beside herself with fury. She tells Orestes that she will be his if he murders Pyrrhus. This he does, then returns to Hermione expecting gratitude. Instead she rebuffs him and kills herself over Pyrrhus's corpse. Orestes goes mad. Andromache, now queen of Epirus is transformed from victim to victor.

Theme: Love is an all-consuming amoral emotion that is both destructive and self-destructive. Love cuts across all gentler impulses and noble ideals, leaving them scarred and maimed.

Style: Racine uses 12-syllable rhyming couplets with a restricted vocabulary of 4000 words (Shakespeare uses 25,000).

Chief Strengths: There are no villains and yet each character must bear some weight for the tragic denouement. As the action accelerates, Racine maintains a universal sympathy while remaining icily impersonal.

Chief weakness: For the Francophile, the language can seem too starchy to be expressive, and the plot too didactically tidy to be tragic.

What they thought of it then: The play was a brilliant success. Racine's racy drama of driven sexuality made Corneille's ponderous plays of duty and patriotism seem dated and jejune.

What we think of it now: Along with *Phèdre*, it is one of Racine's greatest works, although British actors, trained to mouth Shakespeare, are inclined to turn the long rhetorical speeches in rari.

Responsible for: Craig Raine's 1953 which relocates the play's action to a post-Second War Europe where the Axis powers have been triumphant.

Princess of Wales in extra-marital sex shock

Tactless, malodorous and embittered, Caroline of Brunswick was not a happy royal. But, says Lucy Hughes-Hallett, she was a goodnatured one

The Unruly Queen: The Life of Caroline of Brunswick
by Flora Fraser
Macmillan, £20

Poor Caroline of Brunswick! She is chiefly remembered for the passion with which her husband, the Prince of Wales, detested her. His words at their first meeting have justly entered the collective memory as a good joke about a hellishly bad marriage: "Harris, I am not well, pray get me a glass of brandy." (The Princess's teeth were rotting and Lord Malmesbury, who had escorted her to England, had already told obliged to give her some embarrassing intimate advice about the need to wash her person and change her stockings more frequently – advice to which she apparently paid too little heed.)

Twenty-five years later the cruel one-liners were still coming. On being informed that his "bitterest enemy" (the speaker meant Napoleon) was dead, King George IV (as he by then was) exclaimed "Is she, by God?" The latter remark stands as evidence not only of his ludicrous implacability but also of his frivolity. His unloved wife was a match for him in political fecklessness.

Touring Europe in 1814, separated from her husband but still firmly intending to be Queen, and not only of hearts, she chose to socialise, to the Foreign Office's despair, almost exclusively with Bonapartes. She even called on Napoleon's Empress Marie Louise, but the visit was not a success. The Princess of Wales yawned so hard that she and her chair toppled over backwards. She laughed uproariously. The Empress, contemplating her upended feet, did not.

It was not, though, for her failings in an ambassadorial role that this Princess of Wales was disgraced, ostracised and eventually tried in the House of Lords, but for doing what her husband had always done with impunity: engaging in extra-marital sex. Her reputation, even as a teenager, was shocking. Her future mother-in-law Queen Charlotte heard that "when she dances" (which she was seldom allowed to do) a governor followed her through the ballroom "to prevent her making an exhibition of herself by indecent conversation with men." She had already developed a wildly dangerous penchant for playing up to her detractors' worst standards. When, at the age of 16, she was forbidden to attend a ball, she sneared



Caroline caricatured: 'The Effusions of a Troubled Brain' by G. Humphrey. Photo: Bridgeman Art Library

her face with white paste, took to her bed screaming, and claimed to be in labour. The ball was cancelled. Similarly, years later, she was to tease a new lady-in-waiting by referring to a protégé, who was well known to be a laundress's son, as her own husband, and when Walter Scott came to call she whisked him off to the conservatory where she "asked me silly if I was not afraid to be alone with her." By this time her love affairs, real or imaginary, had already been the subject of an official, though secret, enquiry. Clearly she found being stigmatised as a depraved woman as titillating as it was cruel.

She had tried being good, but her marriage never stood a chance. The Prince came drunk to the wedding, telling anyone who would listen that Mrs Fitzherbert was the only woman he would ever love. He passed out under the grate that night, and again three days later, having struck a gentleman who was trying to dissuade him from visiting his old mistress. After little more than a year of virtual imprisonment in Carlton House, with her husband's new mistress Lady Jersey as lady-in-waiting-cum-wardress, the Princess removed herself to a house in Blackheath. There, and subsequently in Kensington Palace and abroad, she led a decreas-

ingly respectable, increasingly jolly life. She liked boisterous party games, rude jokes and staying up so late as to exhaust her poor ladies. Spiteful observers remarked on her coarsening complexion and ridiculous clothes ("showing too much of her naked figure"), but clever men, writers, politicians, travellers and scholars, were drawn to her. George Canning and Thomas Lawrence were both among her alleged lovers. In Italy, once her husband's animosity had driven her to leave England, she lived comfortably if disreputably with a handsome plebeian lover, having attained, as Flora Fraser points out "perhaps the greatest liberty which any English woman enjoyed."

'I might be anything. If a horse loved me, I might be that'

Meoldramatic, promiscuous and unaccountably homophobic, Djuna Barnes was always blessed with the gift of reinventing herself, says Philip Hoare

The Life and Work of Djuna Barnes
by Philip Herring
Viking, £20



Djuna Barnes: sapphic capture

Of the many eccentrics that populate this academic study of a fabulous menagerie, my favourite is the Baroness Elsa von Freytag Loringhoven, whom Djuna Barnes – her principal patron – memorably described decanting from a Manhattan cab in 1916 wearing seventy black and purple anklets, a (cancelled) foreign postage stamp on her cheek in lieu of a beauty spot, and a purple wig entwined with strands from a mooring cable.

Herring's book is full of such glimpses of bohemian life in New York, Paris and London. To footnote aficionados, Djuna Barnes is an evocative name and image: her lips as pursed as those of her contemporary fellow female rebel, Nancy Cunard; both women of a hard new century who had in turn hardened themselves against the world. Barnes's background is a chronicle in itself, full of bizarrely-named relatives: Saxon, Buan and Zudel, her grandmother, a literary and sexual adventurer who had known Speranza Wilde in London. She and Djuna shared a bed for 15 years, where Zudel made her granddaughter play with her breasts. Djuna's polygamous father, Wald is said either to have raped his daughter as a young girl, or to have introduced her at the age of 16 to a middle-aged family friend who took it upon himself to do the deed. Such experiences left Djuna with a permanently wounded look, and a cynical outlook on life, much

of which appears to have been spent in a depressive state: "Melancholia, melancholia, it rides me like a bucking mare". Yet it is the sort of state which created great art – and Herring maintains that *Nightwood*, a Gothic narrative of sexual obsession, is a landmark of modernism.

Djuna's early career progressed from decadent short stories and Beardsleyan art (lamentably this book lacks any reproductions), through daring journalism – undergoing foreshadowing in order to write about the Suffragettes – to star writer status for *McCall's*, who sent her to Paris, the city which would fix her in literary history. She fell easily into the Lost Generation and a long succession of lovers, male and female. When asked if she were a lesbian, she replied, "I might be anything, if a horse loved me. I might be that."

The great female love of her life was Thelma Wood, with whom Djuna smoked dope and conducted a nine-year affair; she said she loved Thelma because she looked like her grandmother. Wood had already had affairs with Edna St Vincent Millay, and "on her knees proposed sex to Peggy Guggenheim" (Djuna's benefactress). She was, said a friend, "made for fucking". Together the pair were a remarkable sight; beautiful, black-caped and glued to each other's arms as they walked the Left Bank. They dined with Natalie Barney's lesbian salon, about whom Djuna wrote *Ladies Almanack*, a satire which Barney loved; *Ryder* was another satire, this time on her own family, a subject ripe for revenge in Djuna's smarting heart.

Revenge was a characteristic of her writing, a sort of post-trauma literary therapy. When Thelma and Djuna's "marriage" broke up bitterly, Barnes portrayed her savagely in *Nightwood*. The book was written partly in Tangiers – where Djuna and her latest lover, Charles Henri Ford, had been invited by Paul Bowles and where she caused comment with her blue, green and purple make-up – and partly at Peggy Guggenheim's rented Devonshire mansion, Hayford Hall, renamed Hangover Hall by its self-abusive tenants.

Affraid of Dartmoor, Djuna stayed in her roccoco bedroom and wrote her narrative of the freaks of *Nightwood*. Herring's assessment of the book is incisive: "It argues that regardless of sexual orientation, human nature itself is perverted and grotesque, which is why people seek to remake themselves. We are all God's jokes." TS Eliot published it at Faber in 1936, subsequently writing a 1,500 word preface for its US publication. He liked its author so much that he kept her photograph on his wall, alongside those of WB Yeats and Groucho Marx.

Herring has taken on the mantle of Djuna's latter-day champion with evident relish and empathy. He points up the value of her work, with its bleak Nietzschean views and acidic, fantastic prose which mutated from decadence through to modernism. The high auto-

biographical content in Barnes's works is both a boon and a blessing for a biographer: switching from biographical fact to Barnesian fiction, Herring's lit crit approach can get in the way of the story. It also makes for occasional repetition, and can seem disjointed; a series of thematic essays rather than a cohesive whole. Yet these are minor caveats. Always entertaining, Herring revels in these sparring personalities of interwar Bohemia as they fight their internecine battles for superiority.

Eliot also published Djuna's verse play, *The Anaphora* in 1957. Translated into Swedish by her new friend, Dag Hammarskjöld, and premiered in Stockholm, it was a further literary revenge on her family, who had violated her person once again by sending her to a sanatorium to treat her alcoholism.

But by that time Djuna had left Europe for good, and the rest of her life was spent holed up in Greenwich Village, where she became unaccountably homophobic, hating her reputation as a lesbian writer. An attempt to write the fabulous Elsa's biography came to nothing – Djuna complained that the book kept trying to become poetry – and she published little in her later years.

Breath, Eyes, Memory

A first novel of precocious maturity which mingles past and present, the horrors and delights of Haiti in a quiet and dignified prose that would be impressive in a writer twice her age.

Edwidge Danticat

I come from a place where beauty eyes and memory are one, a place from which you can't get past like the love you once had.

INDEPENDENT

ABACUS

Suburbia's lonely hearts club band

Emma Hagestadt enjoys a spooky tale of mating rituals and dating nightmares

Louise Doughty writes about people who don't usually get written about. Young women who commute in from London's less salubrious suburbs (Catford, Burnt Oak, East Barnet) who understand the inner workings of the office PC, and buy their earrings at Next. Her heroines are self-employed information consultants who surf the Internet and are always home in time for *Brookside*.

First there's Bet. She's 27, prone to ecstasies and "as promiscuous as Hell". Having lost her boyfriend, Peter (who suffered a head-on collision on the Watford by-pass three weeks after their first date), she's learning to be single again. Iris is

a paler version of Bet. She spends her weekends not in strange men's beds but moping in local cafes, worrying that she should be doing the hoovering. Instead, her boyfriend (also Peter) isn't dead, just unfaithful.

Just as you're wising up to Doughty's game, a third heroine pops up. Another Iris. This Iris has a small child (possibly Peter's), and lives alone in pebble-dashed splendour in Burnt Oak.

Doughty's intention gradually becomes clearer. Bet and Iris are ghostly imitations of each other, and before their story is over some supernatural antics are staged in spooky basements and badly-lit attics. But through all the smoke-screens Doughty throws up, one thing is apparent: all the Irises and Bets are heading for a breakdown.

While it can't be said that dissociation is an original theme for a female novelist, Doughty gives the old chestnut a new spin, and goes on to monitor the lonesome hearts and sexual drives of twentysomething Londoners like no one else around. Every bit as skilled as her contemporaries, Alain de Botton and Julie Myerson, her writing has a pessimistic edge which makes her books all the funnier.

Dance with Me is a painfully accurate record of mating rituals and dating nightmares. Iris's evenings spent playing the part of the "new" girl-friend with Peter's best friends, Alex and Sophie (a horribly smug couple "as plump and blonde" as their soft furnishings) will ring bells; as will Bet's night with Bill, a man who after a meal at the Taj Mahal displays himself (one part in particular) with "the kind of self-regard which women have knocked out of them by the age of six."

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INDEPENDENT

ABACUS

Collection mania

Colin Greenland on a manly tale of heartbreak

Readers put off by abstract, technical-sounding titles need have no fear. *Particle Theory* is a proper novel, more or less, and not at all theoretical, though it hums with social and psychological commentary. Alternatively, it tells two separate stories – one an old-fashioned thrilling adventure, the other a bitter modern farce – about two very different men.

As a boy on Taschia Collective Farm, Ivan Khuchievsky knows strange luminous moments when he seems able to perform supernatural feats. Some, like breaking solid furniture, leave concrete evidence. Others, like creating a kindly nurse or a city called Rubinsk in the middle of the cornfields, are, to say the least, more equivocal. In any event, Ivan knows he has a secret destiny. There is a legacy of buried icons waiting for him, and meanwhile a training of iron discipline at the brutal hands of the overseer Boris. Unfortunately Boris, who is to tell all on Ivan's 18th birthday, dies two months too soon, in a skating accident for which Ivan believes himself magically responsible.

To find his destiny, Ivan runs away, not once, but again and again, his whole life long. From Taschia he escapes to Rubinsk, from Rubinsk to the army, from the army to the West, where he is welcomed into Cambridge. Reuters sends him to Paris; he resigns to run a second-hand bookshop in London. He sets up old people's homes, then advertising agencies. He leads safaris of elderly Americans into the Serengeti, where arm-wrestling skills learned from Boris accidentally win him the chieftain of a minor tribe. He immediately abdicates to join a think-tank in Chicago. Somewhere along his tortuous way, it becomes apparent that what he is really doing is looking for Sofka, the girl who, while hiding him from the Rubinsk police, relieved him of his virginity.

Though Michael Wordingham is another orphan, his story is in strict contrast. Overwhelmed by a doting grandmother, and her Polish housekeeper, a lonely refugee called Elfreda, Michael never does anything except become obese. There is one magnificent portrait: "Michael at nearly 20 was tall, oval in shape and already losing his hair in front, either because he had pulled it all

Particle Theory
by Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy
Hutchinson, £14.95

out or for hereditary reasons. He somewhat resembled a new-laid egg or much sucked boobon. His habit of running his nails down his plump left cheek continued, and now he often ate the little rolled-up fragments from under them. He liked the salty taste."

Anal-compulsive to the letter, Michael spends his life collecting newspapers, paperbacks, bus tickets, the cardboard middles of toilet rolls. Floor by floor, he forces his granny to evict her tenants from a house in Drayton Gardens, and uses the increased space to accommodate things he finds in skips: bits of string and bottle tops; towel rails and broken hotplates. He collects his own hair, his own excretions. He catalogues his collections and records the cataloguing in his journals. Then he catalogues the journals.

This is an authentically masculine book. Ivan, the arm-wrestler, the good soldier, the dynamic executive, never runs away from anything in defeat, but always at the peak of success. Michael represents the gloomier side of the gender: self-centred, helplessly dependent, manipulative. Each man is obsessed with the woman whose fortune it will be to sanctify his life, should he ever find her. While Ivan dreams of Sofka, Michael yearns for Elfreda, and searches for her with his own mad methodicality, posting two thousand Roneoed copies of a love letter into the letterboxes of Cambridge. There is never any hope, really, for Ivan or Michael, or for us the readers. What turns out to connect the middle-class British boy and the Russian peasant is that both have given their hearts already, irredeemably.

Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy is the author of *The Rise and Fall of the British Navy*, and he has put at least eight examples of the genre in these pages. When at the end Ivan and Michael disappear from view, we know perfectly well where they have gone: back to the nursery, like all good boys.



Death's drum: like a Ku Klux Klan roadie, this hooded Sicilian waits to carry a drum in one of the bewildering religious rituals that, along with marriages, processions, field-work and children's games, stud the pages of *The Island of the Sicilians* (Dewi Lewis), a celebration of the work of Giuseppe Leone, the great Italian lensman. "The photographer," writes Diego Marmorio in a wildly pretentious introduction to this unsentimental portfolio, "always pictures something that has just emerged from the past and is sailing rockily towards the reefs of the future..."

Discovering daddy in the deep freeze

Miranda Seymour finds vivid characters and special pleading in a novel of gay parenthood

Readers of Michael Arditti's moving and powerful first novel, *The Celibate*, will not be misled by the title of his second into supposing that he has written about a conventional family. What he has done, as he did in that book, is to make a passionate case for the homosexual's right to love and to be loved.

The narrator, Leo Young, describes the complicated past relationship he has had with two people, Candida Mulliner and Robin Standish. Robin is handsome, Catholic and confused about his sexuality. Candida, with her admiring undergraduate friend Leo in tow, gravitates towards him out of a longing for the kind of aristocratic, ultra-English background to which she feels she has a right to belong. Leo, the shy son of a woman who runs a boarding-house and who believes in sticking to your own class, is able to view the Standishs with a critical eye and see the ugliness of their small stately home. Candida is intoxicated,

Pagan and her Parents
by Michael Arditti
Sinclair-Stevenson, £12.95

even when Lady Standish, drawing through lipstick-stained teeth, talks of a drunken husband who raped her, beat her and was finally "dragged from the mud of a drained lake, foetid in body as in spirit."

Influenced by Robin, Candida becomes a rebel; when he becomes engaged to a nice county girl, she turns up at the party to warn the fiancée that she may be in for a nasty attack of herpes. Leo, as always, looks on and is presciently warned by Lady Standish against the danger of loving anybody too much, unless he wants a broken heart.

Pagan's unhappy story begins after the slow and unflinchingly described

death of Candida. The child's father has never been named, although Candida's promiscuity suggests many possibilities. On her deathbed, Candida entrusts her small daughter to Leo, the man who she identifies as a father-figure. The choice seems ideal: Pagan is a devoted six-year-old; Leo is a lonely but successful television chat-show host with a house in Kensington, a cook and infinite patience for Pagan's caprices.

The problems, and a sour form of comedy, begin when Candida's adoptive parents, never having seen their grand-daughter, decide that she cannot be entrusted to the care of a homosexual. They take Leo to court; the newspapers dig out every unlikely and plausible detail they can find to tarnish his reputation; his career is ruined and Pagan is carried off by the ghoulish grandparents to be transformed into Patience and taught the art of self-sacrifice. (One nice and telling detail is the grandmother's

refusal to let her eat one of the jam tarts she is permitted to help bake for members of the St John's Ambulance Brigade.) Fortunately, the story does not end there.

Arditti is unusually deft in his manipulation of the way a narrative unfolds. In *The Celibate*, he played with different voices to heighten the suspense; here, his decision to have Leo address himself to the dead Candida allows the reader to question Leo's fascination with a character we are never allowed to meet. A whimsical blend of Zuleika Dothson, Sally Bowles and Becky Sharp, fearless and dreadful in her ability to enjoy herself at the expense of other people, Candida is a more memorable creation than poor, decent Leo.

He is almost too good to be true – he has to be for Arditti's purposes. While Candida is mad and bad enough to send Cruella De Vil running for cover, I was unsure whether I was meant to smile as unkindly as I did

when, having dreamed that she is the secret daughter of an Earl and a beautiful housemaid, she learns that her mother was a telephonist and her father a meat packer. "You mean in an albatross?" Leo asks, trying to make things seem a little more exciting. "No," she answers, in his recollection, "there's not even any blood in it. He worked in a deep freeze."

Suspense, as with *The Celibate*, is maintained until the end, when we are deluged with as many startling disclosures as in the last pages of a good Wilkie Collins. Few, it must be said, seem wholly plausible. I don't wish to give them away, but it troubled me that Mr Arditti's determination to make Leo a saint-free hero and ideal father-figure has resulted in some over-zealous blackening of other characters. He makes sure that the case for homosexual parenthood is not only validated but triumphant. I am not convinced that he has chosen the best fictional way to win the argument.

Fruity appetites

Victoria Coren, confronted by a plate of girly pornography, takes a cautious nibble

Eat Me
by Linda Jaivin
Chatto & Windus, £9.99

According to a recent feature in the *News Of The World* – brilliantly titled "Ooh, You Are Author!" – there are "an estimated five million British girls who love a dirty novel." Women's porn, it seems, is the hot new genre. *Eat Me* is not only girl-for-girl action, it's also Australian, feminist and vaguely (God help us) post-modern.

This generous helping of sauce for the goose is peppered with strident female academics and vegetarians, who meet in Sydney cafés to discuss their fantasies. Though explicitly sexual, most of these focus in some way on food – hence the title. Think women and danger, naughtiness and illicit thrills and you end up, uncannily, at the fridge door.

The novel opens with an episode involving a woman and an array of fruit: this is the Marianne Faithfull Mars Bar trick for a health-conscious generation. It sounds rather uncomfortable, if you ask me – particularly the kiwi fruit – but at least she stops short of making out with a pineapple.

The imagery throughout is all giant leeks and plum puddings; in one section, Jake "peeled off Julia's clothes as if they were the leaves of a steamed artichoke... his gaze rested on the Mediterranean caramel of her belly before proceeding down... to the folds of moist gravlax". A pretty unappetising mixture, if you think about it.

Even when the snacks are left behind, the sex scenes are too metaphorical for simple gratification. Getting it together with a Chinese circus performer, one girl confesses: "I kneel down and swallow the sword of the sword-swallower, charm the snake of the snake-charmer." Lucky for him he wasn't a ringmaster. Another obstacle to erotic success is that the novel is plagued by common sense and humour. Slinking seductively towards a lover, "the smooth soles of [Helen's] new shoes slid on the linoleum and she came in for a rather clumsy landing on his lap. 'Oof,' he cried, despite himself."

Erotica, more than any other genre, demands the suspension of disbelief and here it is undercut by earthy realism. Like most things that come out of Australia, this is funny and likeable, but deeply un erotic. Bathos and realism are the enemies of porn, that realm where fantasy swells unimpeded. There is no room for, if you will forgive me, the deflating prick.

But Jaivin's main problem is that successful porn is inherently nasty, and her attempt to reclaim it for a right-on readership is admirable but doomed. *Eat Me's* women are very sexually empowered – always on top, talking of "engulfment" rather than penetration – no thrills for the unreconstructed girl here. Even the food is all trendy international deli-produce: "Camilla poked the tip of her tongue into her luscious and felled the long pastry". Not so sexy with a savoury and weak tea, I guess.

Condoms interrupt the flow (yes, yes), peeping Toms pause to point out that "the women I watch are all perfectly safe", and Jaivin gets into terrible ideological confusion with an episode in which a woman hires a black slave hut takes pains to stress that "we're enacting a fantasy, with his consent", thus pleasing no-one. As a literary exercise, it's all very interesting – but the fact is, you can't be right-on when you jerk off.

Paperbacks

Reviewed by Emma Hagestadt and Christopher Hirst



A Natural History of the Senses by Diane Ackerman (Phoenix, £7.99) A big bestseller in the States, Diane Ackerman (poet, essayist and naturalist) celebrates the five senses and the "sense-luscious" world we live in with the passion of a Roman voluptuary. It's the kind of book that you can dip into at random and experience a quick sensory frisson each time: delights include Helen Keller on the "elemental" whiff of young men, the importance of the crunch factor in crisps, and why perfumes smell strongest just before a storm. Ackerman's own personal nirvana is wallowing in a vanilla-scented bath while sipping a vanilla cream seltzer.



The Trouble with Science by Robin Dunbar (Faber, £7.99) This had-tempered but stimulating polemic insists that science and empirical observation are basic to human life; we ignore them at our peril. Dunbar offers plenty of evidence, from the rescue of Apollo 13 to the failure of Norse colonies in Greenland. But the case is overstated. His assertion that the reaction against science began with 19th-century Romanticism is dubious. Shelley, for one, adored it. Science has gained ground ever since this book appeared last year: there is no mention of the hugely inspiring Hubble photos.

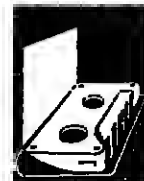


Bosnia: A Short History by Noel Malcolm (Paperback, £10) In this rich and fascinating work, Malcolm performs a prodigious feat in untangling arcane detail and debunking myth. The Serbs and the Croats were Slave tribes who arrived in the seventh century, but the basis of their animosity is economic (Christian peasants resenting Muslim landlords) rather than ethnic. In fact, for much of the period since 1878, the two peoples lived peacefully together. In a new epilogue taking the story to the end of 1995, Malcolm says that ethnic separation will ensure a "much more troubled future".



The Brendan Voyage by Tim Severin (Abacus, £8.99) The idea that the Irish made it to America 400 years before the Vikings is a thrilling one. Putting his faith in the *Navigatio*, a medieval text which describes St Brendan's voyage to the Promised Land, explorer Tim Severin and four friends reconstructed the saint's tiny ox-hide boat and put the myth to the test. Severin's account of their terrifying journey across North Atlantic is unemotionally told, but the power of his story is undeniable. The book includes the text of the *Navigatio* and extensive design notes on the boat's construction. A real hoy's own adventure.

Audiobooks



You Magazine Short Story Collection
read by Janet McLeer and Bill Nighy

Snow Falling on Cedars
read by Peter Marinker

Thirteen pointed and witty tales by such top novelists as Muriel Spark, Lisa St Aubin, Angela Huth, Ben Okri, Alan Sillitoe and Victoria Glendinning make up the *You Magazine Short Story Collection* (CSA Teltapes, £7.99). The outstanding bloom in a classy bunch is Jane Gardam's "the Boy Who Turned into a Bike". This unabridged reading of David Guterson's *Snow Falling on Cedars* (Sterling, 15 hours, £17.99, mail order only from Freephone 0800

136919) has a slow build-up, but gets more and more compelling as the murder of a Japanese fisherman proves to raise extraordinary moral issues for the little Puget Sound community.

Peter Marinker copes effortlessly with American, Japanese and Scandinavian accents, and he has a suppressed excitement in his voice which keeps the listener closely engaged with the story.

Christina Hardyment.

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property country houses

More than a lick of paint and a new loo

Amanda Seidl on folk who do up country houses

A Jane Austen fever continues to sweep the nation, it is perhaps predictable that sales of Georgian country houses should be soaring. But not many people can afford to buy, let alone maintain, houses the size of Pemberley or Rosings Park in *Pride and Prejudice*. Enter the developers who are making it possible for those who don't have a fortune to enjoy the style and splendour of a great house - provided they are willing to share it.

You couldn't get more stylish than the spectacular 17th-century Burley on the Hill near Oakham in Rutland. With sweeping views of Rutland Water and 400 acres of parkland, Burley is one of the finest country houses in England, but like so many of its peers, it had fallen into disrepair. Briefly the home of Cypriot tycoon Asil Nader, Burley was bought three years ago by the acknowledged doyen of country house restoration, Kit Martin, who has restored and developed it.

Despite the isolated location and prices of between £295,000 and £495,000 for the main house and apartments, all 22 units have been sold even though work is not yet complete. Apart from the house's stunning situation, the popularity of the development is due to Martin's sympathetic conversion, which created elegant and spacious houses in the main wings of the mansion and cottages with gardens in the service buildings. He even returned deer to the deer park.

"It is a tremendous privilege to live in a house like this," says Tony Atwood, who bought Church Wing last year. "Instead of paying for a large garden and stables we don't use, we have put all our money into this unique house and have the use of a 400-acre estate as our back garden."

During the recession, Mr Martin was

almost alone in taking on great country houses for conversion. Burley was his 10th project and he is already working on his fourth Scottish conversion - the 150-acre Formakin estate near Glasgow, designed by Robert Lorimer in the 1900s but never completed. Prices start at £125,000 for the two-bedroom Byre House.

Converting country mansions is increasing due to the number of suitable premises coming on the market. Many great houses were converted to institutional use during and after the Second World War, and during the Eighties, many more were turned into offices or training centres. But the recession has reduced demand for both offices and training establishments, while the rationalisation of the Health Service has made many isolated hospitals redundant.

At the same time, the public's appetite for gracious living has been assisted by a general dissatisfaction with the standard and uniformity of new houses. "In the late Eighties, I noticed that while nobody seemed to have any money for new houses, there was always plenty of demand for historic properties," says Andrew Murphy of Legion Homes. Mr Murphy's observation led him to buy Wormleybury in Hertfordshire, a Grade I-listed Georgian manor house that could have been the model for Mr Bingley's Netherfield Hall in *Pride and Prejudice*.

Set in 40 acres of parkland complete with lake, ancient trees and yew walk, Wormleybury provides the space and views lost long ago to most properties in the crowded M25 commuter belt. The principal rooms, designed by Robert Adam, form the communal entrance hall and the living rooms for the main apartment. Light floods through the sash windows illuminating the carefully restored stucco designs in the Dining Room which



Wormleybury in Hertfordshire, recently restored and converted in nine apartments

Photograph: Jane Baker

comes fully decorated - including original paintings by Angelika Kauffmann.

Incorporating the conveniences of modern living into historic houses is not easy, and compromises have to be made. Mr Murphy has tried to keep the ground and first-floor living rooms intact while sacrificing the lower and upper floors for bedrooms with en suite bathrooms. The apartments are duplex, which has meant fitting in extra staircases and lobbies, something frowned upon by the Georgian Group.

"It is important to work with the grain of the house," says Neil Burton of the Georgian Group, which advises the Government and councils on all aspects relating to Georgian buildings. But because most great houses have at least four storeys, vertical conversion creates apartments with a daunting number of stairs.

The stairs at Wormleybury have not deterred many prospective buyers, although one octogenarian was puffing a

little on the third ascent, admits Murphy. All but three of the apartments are sold or under offer to a mix of buyers - from a young couple expecting their first child to an expatriate banker.

"The funny thing is that many of the people attracted to country-house conversions are the sort of people who, two centuries ago, would have lived in a big house," says Mr Burton.

While Mr Murphy has spent more than £1 million restoring the house and converting the interior into nine apartments, the previous owners have built themselves a house in the former orangery and are converting the courtyard to a new-style house. Five new houses have also been built and sold in the paddock beyond the gardener's cottage so that Wormleybury will soon support a cosy hamlet around St Lawrence's Church.

From the builder's point of view, it makes sense to put in as many units as

English Heritage and local planners will allow, and as long as the new houses do not intrude on the setting of the great house, there are benefits, too: maintenance costs can be spread more thinly.

The Georgian Group is not enthusiastic about additional houses in the grounds of listed houses. "We are much happier about the conversion of houses to multiple occupancy than conversion to an institutional use, because it is a fairly low-intensity use," explains Mr Burton. "But we are against enabling development on the whole because it is almost impossible to build new houses in the grounds without compromising the character of the original house."

Undaunted by the problems thrown up by conservationists, Mr Murphy is looking for another country house to convert. "It definitely beats sitting in a portable office on a housing site," he says.

For what it's worth

Things are looking up, according to the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, who report sustained improvement in the housing market in the first three months of the year. This contrasts favourably with the depressing autumn report last year which said there was little sign of an upturn in the housing market. Falling interest rates and competitive mortgages are two of the reasons for the improved activity.

Yet better sales do not mean better prices. Quality period properties are showing the best increases but agents warn against unrealistic pricing. Mark Everett of Michael Everett & Co in Surrey voices the general opinion: "Overpriced property is sticking badly. Accurate pricing is vital."

A widespread shortage of good houses on the market, particularly in the South East and South West, is also affecting prices. Devon and Dorset have enjoyed a record first quarter.

Agents remain cautious about another false dawn and will be watching the Budget for anything that might damage the fragile market. "Don't get too excited," warns Tony Gray of Fraser Wood in the West Midlands. "It's not so much a 'feel good' factor but rather an 'I don't feel too bad' factor."

Who's moving

Dummer has become synonymous with Sarah Ferguson, who was brought up in the Hampshire village. The Cottage which belonged to the Duchess's grandmother is up for sale. A pretty thatched, four-bedroom, three-reception room house, it has recently been restored, redecorated and sold through John D Wood (01962 86131) for £310,000.

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The Ticket

The Gatwick Express costs £8.90 one-way. But you can save £1.50 by buying a ticket to Crawley on an ordinary train, and jump off when it stops at Gatwick airport – small stuff, but every little helps when you have no idea where you are going. And this buys a day return, just in case I was obliged to come back to London.

Nothing, whether a trip on Eurostar from Waterloo or a flight from Heathrow or Stansted, was ruled out.

Gatwick is the obvious choice for a jaunt like this, because of its mix of charters and scheduled flights – and the proximity to the Newhaven and Isle of Wight ferries just in case all the planes are full. I hoped I would find a return flight for around £100, leaving plenty for incidentals.

Dawn on a foggy day at Gatwick presents a screenful of temptations: departures to Catania, San Juan and Tallinn flicker alluringly on the TV monitors. First, though, you need a ticket. I went straight to the travel agency on the station concourse, called Flightbookers. In response to a request for a cheap flight, I was politely referred elsewhere on the grounds that the company specialised in long-haul travel. Leaving the office, I was a bemused to read a board advertising short-haul flights to Paris, Amsterdam and Frankfurt for around £100.

Health risks presented obstacles to truly global gallivanting. Places like Caird or Goa were ruled out because of the impossibility of taking all the necessary health precautions.

Self-preservation apart, no preconceptions were permitted about where I might end up, but the prospect of a destination rather warmer than Stockholm or Moscow appealed. This implied a charter flight to the Mediterranean. The problem with charters as far as the instant traveller is

concerned is that they are intended for holiday-makers who plan in advance. Although the charter operators have staff at the airport, most will decline to sell you a ticket. But the crafty traveller in search of a bargain will head for room 1226 of the Hilton Hotel.

This improbable residence is the Gatwick home of Avro, one of Britain's leading seat-only specialists. Working on the principle that no commodity is more perishable than an aircraft seat, the company is happy to sell space on imminent departures. At about the position where a trouser press would be in an ordinary hotel room sits a huge board on which all the day's flights are chalked. An instant result: "We can get

Skybreak. Putting my go-anywhere cash on the table, I was offered a return flight for £129 to Faro. The fickle finger of flying fate was pointing firmly at Portugal.

I munched through a £3 breakfast at Spudulike, then mulled over the alternatives as I meandered through the airport. Not all the options were alluring. A train was just about to depart for Glasgow, costing £68 return and scheduled to take nearly 10 hours. British Airways' destinations were tempting: Miami, New York, Nairobi, all closer in terms of time than Glasgow, but beyond my budget. So I checked out the chances of check-in for a cheaper short-haul flight. Claire's plane to Madrid had flown, but another was bound for Faro. How much?



Paradise on the Algarve

you to Faro at 1pm for £49. But this was a one-way fare, with no guaranteed space for the return flight at the same fare. The Avro representative suggested he give me the name of its agent in the southern Portuguese town. The staff there would be able to offer me something, "but it may not be until Tuesday."

I elected to try to arrange a more certain journey. Thomas Cook has an agency in the arrivals hall of Gatwick's south terminal, selling hotel rooms in London to inbound passengers. But for people after a quick getaway in the opposite direction, the staff can check late availability with another seat-only company,

"We have a World Offer of £129.50 including tax". So for an extra 50 pence on the charter fare on offer, I could have more legroom. Drink a beer on the flight (free on BA, £1.50 on Air 2000), and the sums shift in favour of scheduled. I paid.

The flight, like many others that morning, was delayed by fog. This meant lunch (a £3 picnic from the Whistlestop supermarket), which was nearly to tip me over the edge. I should have changed money first. Asking around at all the bureaux de change, the best deal was from Travelix. I had planned to change £50. But the prospect of 11,000 crisp Portuguese escudos for £50.85 proved too tempting. I would tackle the problem of getting back to London with only £6.75 later. While mists and the backlog of flights cleared, I stood in Waterstone's trying to memorise the *Cadogan Guide to the Algarve*.

The Holiday

The pension that the lady at Faro tourist office recommended had twice as many stars (two) as I could afford. So I ended up at the Residencia Madelena instead, where a room with no view costs £11 a night. And to muddy the waters a little about just how far I actually got, I took the coastal train to Lagos. Technically, this is the delightful resort at the west of the Algarve rather than the former capital of Nigeria, but at least I could get a picture taken in front of the sign saying LAGOS.

Three more substantial rewards repaid any amount of aggravation, and would justify £200 of anyone's cash.

Simon Calder

The world's finest collection of sponge cakes is exhibited each Sunday morning in the porch of the church in the centre of Portimão, a fishing port astride a broad estuary. Sweet, syrupy and sticky cakes are sold in aid of church funds, at prices that even travellers counting their escudos will find tempting. Who needs lunch when you have an industrial-sized wedge of sponge in your backpack?

Another church provided the cultural highlight. São Antonio, in Lagos, is a Baroque implosion of gilded woodwork, heavy with cherubs and *trompes-l'œil*, that looks as if it has floated in from Florence.

By supper time, the effects of the cake overdose had worn off sufficiently for a meal as fine as it was filling. On any ordinary holiday, the Vilaça restaurant – tucked into a dodgy old backstreet in Faro – would be just the sort of honest, local haunt where you don't know what a meal will cost and neither do you care. I asked for the special, but not for its price, and sweated.

The grilled swordfish tasted as if it had leapt straight from the Atlantic into the fire. The intense flavours of the accompanying salad spoke of a land where winter had never really happened, and were attenuated by a glass of coarse and cheerful (and, I hoped, cheap) wine. I was relieved to find that this feast cost just £6, so I would avoid washing-up duty that night. I tipped generously – and happily – and vowed to return in a less anxious state.

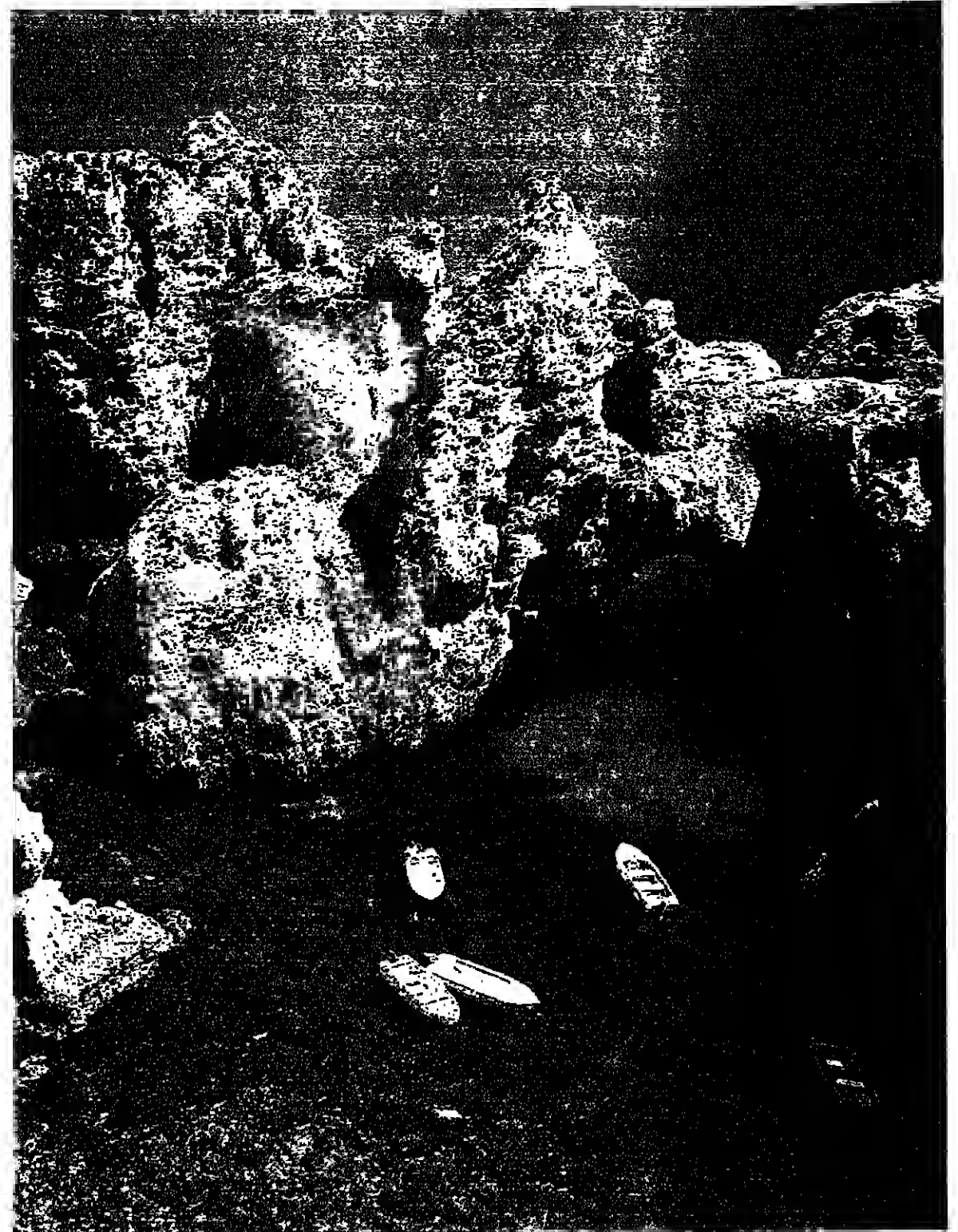
The Return

The good thing about scheduled flights is that they are frequent. The bad thing about my ticket was that it said "no change of reservation". The kindness of the check-in agent at Faro airport meant she allowed me on an earlier flight without fuss. Perhaps she felt sorry for someone who looked out of fortune.

Back at Gatwick, my travels took a surreal turn. If you walk out of the north terminal, just past the Shell garage you hit a long-distance footpath. Join the Sussex Borders Path (as it is called) as it skirts the Fuel Farm and heads off towards the Ramada Hotel. After a half-hour hike, you are at Horley station. From here, a mile up the line from Gatwick, the train fare falls to £6. I made it back to Victoria with 25p and tired feet.

Baroque churches, cakes and the Sussex Borders Path in a single weekend – it's amazing what £200 can buy.

Simon Calder



Fishing boats in view from the cliffs around Lagos

Photograph: Ulli Seer



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...but someone has to do it

Sue Wheat meets three people who make a living by, and for, skiing

They think it's all over, or at least it soon will be. Though the prospects for Easter look good, most northern hemisphere skiers are waiting the thaw and a long, warm wait until next season. Yet for some people a week a year is just not enough. They make a living by, and for, skiing.

THE INSTRUCTOR

Diane Henderson



Diane went out to San Carlos de Bariloche in southern Argentina as a nurse, doing night shifts so she could ski by day. But the pull of the mountains was too much and she exchanged tending those who had injured themselves skiing to trying to prevent them from having to go to hospital at all - by becoming a ski instructor. "I did a local guides course to learn about the area, and when I got fed up with nursing, someone suggested I use my guiding skills as a ski instructor. So I spent a season teaching South American kids aged between two and nine how to handle having sliding feet."

"It's hard work, but great fun. The first class is at 9am and you usually have six or seven people. In the busy season, you probably have half an hour for lunch and go back to teaching again until about 4.30pm. In the evening, you join other instructors or skiers you've met. It's really sociable, but you have to remember you're a professional, too - you can't go too mad or you'd never be able to get on the slopes in the morning."

For enthusiasts who can't bear the thought of packing their skis away for summer, South America is the ideal place as the season starts just after Europe's ends. "A lot of ski teams from the northern hemisphere train here, but it's less well known for Europeans, many of whom want a summer holiday in the summer. The atmosphere is different - Latin Americans definitely have more fun."

THE OPERATOR

Debbie Marshall

Your run to the slopes could start in Surbiton, the home of Crystal Holidays - where every day is focused, snowflake sharp, on winter. Debbie Marshall started working with Crystal Holidays seven years ago, when the company just had one chalet in France. Now she is programme director for France - Crystal

Holidays' biggest destination. The company now takes 90,000 people skiing a year to France, Austria, North America and Italy.

"Each winter season starts as soon as the previous season ends," explains Debbie. "After the winter, we start recruiting for the next season and hire about 300 staff as reps, resort managers, chalet girls, chefs, nannies, maintenance people and head office staff. Almost all staff recruited are British but they need to speak French, ski proficiently and have the right kind of personality for the job - you could say they're our ambassadors."

"The contracting programme starts in December until the end of the season, contracting chalets, apartments and hotels; at the same time, we start brochure production. Our first brochure will be out in two weeks, and there are two more editions through the year. Before the season starts, there is a massive training course for everyone we've recruited, then the first arrivals come in the first week of December. We have a few quiet weeks, then Christmas and New Year, which are enormous."

Courchevel is proving the most popular French resort, followed by Meribel and La Plagne, and the nuclear tests in the Pacific don't seem to have prompted clients to give France a miss. "The main problem seems to be the franc at the moment, rather than the



nuclear testing," explains Debbie, "but people who really love good skiing will always go to France."

THE CHALET GIRL

Bridget Collyer

If you spent the winter cooking, cleaning, mothering in a surrogate fashion and being an all-round good egg, you might be counting the days until the season ends. But Bridget Collyer doesn't regret being any of those things.

She was recruited by Bladon Lines to work in Verbier, an upmarket and lively resort in Switzerland. "Basically, I was hosting a week-long house party every week. It's a really special week for everyone - it's their holiday, they've saved up for it, they love skiing and they probably want to party as well," so it has to be good.

"A day in my life as a chalet girl meant being up at 6.30am with the five other chalet girls I lived with



Ski mania: a job in the industry means you can make the ski season last all year

Photograph: Jess Stock

Snow report

What a wonderful thing is altitude. Throughout this mild and quite sunny week (as in the previous week), altitude has been the key to good skiing conditions wherever in the Alps you looked. Sunshine also mattered, of course; powdery snow was to be found pretty well exclusively on north-facing slopes, and the only resort-level runs worth risking your skis on skiing were those shaded by mountains or trees. There was some snow early in the week in most French and Italian resorts, and in some Swiss ones, but not it was enough to have any impact on conditions: to find good skiing this week, you had to find slopes where February's snow is still lasting well. As I write, on Friday morning, there is wet snow falling here in Klosters, following a dusting overnight; but the forecast doesn't encourage hopes for the decent dump of snow that would be very welcome in most parts of the Alps as Easter approaches. The Pyrenees continue to offer Europe's best all-round conditions, with good snow depths and rather lower temperatures than in the Alps. Meanwhile, winter still rules in north America: Colorado and Utah resorts offer low temperatures and good conditions after snowfalls early in the week, and more fresh snow was expected this weekend in both the east and west of the Continent - giving a welcome boost to Whistler/Blackcomb, in particular, and to the New England resorts.

Chris Gill

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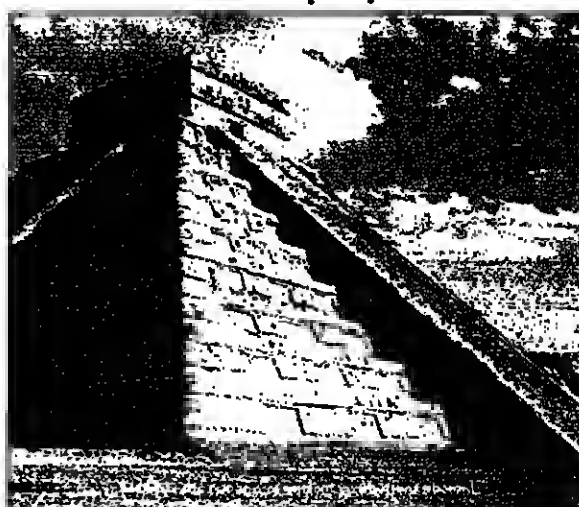
Eclipse Direct brings you a tour of the real Mexico - a tour that enables you to experience the true flavour of a country steeped in history and high in excitement and adventure - followed by a relaxing week in one of Mexico's most glamorous resorts, Puerto Vallarta, flanked by beautiful beaches and the Sierra Madre Mountains.

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7 NIGHT TOUR ITINERARY

the Plaza de los Mortires. Continue to Puerto Vallarta. **Day 5. Puerto Vallarta.** Visit Lake Patzcuaro and take a boat to Janitzio Island, inhabited by the Tarascan Indians. Afternoon in Tzintzuntzan. Overnight in Puerto Vallarta.

Day 6. Puerto Vallarta-Guadalupe. Two nights in Guadalupe. Lunch in Tlaquepaque. Arrive late afternoon in Guadalupe.

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Snow's up by Chris Gill

Andermatt, that wonderful backwater

In a world where most ski resorts offer variations on the same theme, it's good to know that there are still some special places retaining an individual character, content to appeal to a narrow market rather than the broad mass of holiday skiers. One such resort is Andermatt, where I spent a memorable day a couple of weeks ago.

Andermatt is the ultimate Alpine backwater. The valley-bottom village (traditional but slightly towny in style, despite its small size) is isolated from the Valais and Graubünden by high passes which are closed in winter - though car-carrying trains climb over the latter and burrow beneath the former. Over the equally

impassable St Gotthard pass to the south lies Italy, or at least Italian Switzerland; in 1980, a road tunnel under the pass was opened, but its mouth is some miles down the valley below Andermatt; so the summer traffic that once trundled past the village on its way between Zurich and Milan is syphoned off, effectively pushing Andermatt even further from the beaten track.

The great majority of Andermatt's skiers are Swiss, based on the edge of the village. When the lift will stand it, the village attracts Italians through the tunnel, too. But the British, once numerous here, as in so many little old Swiss resorts, are thin on the ground.

The few who go are mostly attracted by an outfit that encapsulates the appeal of Andermatt - Alpine Reality, an amalgam of two specialist off-piste guiding businesses, now under the direction of the founder of one of them, Alex Clapasson. AAMR operates in various Swiss resorts, but Andermatt is home base, and Clapasson has recently tightened his grip on the resort's operations. This tall, lean mountain man now sits in an office in the smart base station of Andermatt's new cable-car as director of the lift company.

The new cable-car up the Gemsstock has twice the capacity of the old one, and runs faster; even so, it is no monster, and morning queues are still common, especially when buses arrive from Lucerne and Zurich. Are further "improvements" in store? Absolutely not, says Clapasson: "What we have is special, and we must not spoil it by opening it up to

everyone." How right he is.

The delight of the Gemsstock is that it is a big, steep mountain on which those who can handle it have plenty of room to explore their limits. Practically all the marked runs are now marked black, including all three main runs from the 2963m top station. The two in the main north-facing bowl are not fearfully steep, but offer about 800m vertical of moguls amid rugged terrain; below mid-mountain are another 700m of black skiing, again mostly moguls. But that's only the beginning as far as Clapasson's guests are concerned.

Within the bowl is huge amounts of steep off-piste skiing; outside it, three or four adventurous routes in different directions. And the place gets snow. In the course of my recent Swiss tour, I visited eight resorts, and only one had something resembling powder snow - Andermatt. What's more, it was the only one with snow on the streets. That's what I call special.

WORLD COVER

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Traditional Mexican dancing

Plastic men, plastic cats and dogs

Britain's newest theme park doesn't officially open until Friday. But Tracey Garner got a sneak preview, thanks to her son Jack

Modern-day theme parkery is a funny business. We send a Brit, Trevor Davies, to mastermind the year-long culture thrill ride in Copenhagen. European Capital of Culture for 1996. In return, Denmark sends us Legoland. The maker of the plastic bricks has a long-established original in Billund, a small town in the middle of Jutland (and nowhere). The Danish invasion is the latest attack in the theme park war that is gathering momentum and g-forces across England, a country already endowed with a much higher occurrence of thrills per hectare. Can Denmark's audacious opening next week – so close to Her Majesty's home – attract the nation's fun-seekers? I took my son Jack, aged eight, to find out.

Lions, polar bears, lizards and the like can still be found on the old Windsor Safari Park site, but these are now creatures of the Lego kind – painstakingly pieced together out of millions of those little plastic bricks, which many a mother will recognise as the things that hurt like hell when you tread on them and are a nightmare to get out of the Hoover's innards. The preview day on Saturday, ahead of next Friday's public opening, was exclusively for members of the Lego Club. It was billed as an opportunity to road test the park – in trade terms, a "soft opening" to iron out problems before the big day. Pay the discounted admission of £10, and he among the first kids on the new blocks.

So all the people who flooded in at 10am last Saturday were already Lego aficionados. The models certainly lived up to their expectations. Attention to detail is paramount: bright plastic birds in the trees, an injection-moulded boy attempting to retrieve his kite from the roof of a building, even a built-by-numbers dog relieving himself against a real tree. Twenty million bricks alone are used to recreate the cities of Europe, not counting the ones that are no doubt stuck down the back of the company sofa.

But putting the bricks to one side for a moment, what else is there to do at this latest addition to our growing band of theme parks? If you go expecting white-knuckle rides and roller coasters, you'll be sadly disappointed. Rides are few and far between, and unashamedly aimed at the under-12s. The chance to drive your own Lego car (with the promise of a driving licence at the end of it) and piloting a boat along a snaking river were probably the most popular attractions, and the queues built up quickly. A hot summer Sunday could be quite an ordeal.

There are several areas for children to play with bricks. One excited chap, grasping a couple of motorbikes, was rooming them enthusiastically along



Pecadilly Circus built by numbers at Legoland's latest venture in Windsor

a mini road with full sound effects blasting from his mouth, while his son played quietly in the corner. As ever, the children's adventure play area falls in the way of many theme parks: a serious lack of seating for parents (the ones who don't happen to be playing with bricks).

Every theme park has to have live entertainment, and Legoland's are a mixed bag. The harbour show was superb, with five enthusiastic sailors enacting the Mystery of the Missing Lego Bricks (down the back of the sofa, surely?), and leaping into freezing water from the top of a 30ft light-house to rapturous applause. It's probably best to draw a veil over the other shows in the hope that when "Overture and Beginners" is called on opening night, the acts will have been polished up.

And beware of the maze: it's not as tame as first appearances might have you believe. The Danes obviously get a kick out of sending jets of water up the trouser legs of unsuspecting visitors. Few found it funny on a freezing March afternoon, including the toddler found in the ladies toilet whose Mum was des-

perately trying to dry off his clothes under the hand dryer.

The Lego Shop – which is strategically positioned at the exit – stocks an unequalled range of all things Lego, from computer mouse mats to a £35 tie. But from about 4pm onwards the shop and its tills seemed



Eight-year-old Jack, impressed by Danish building techniques

inadequate under the challenge of hordes of departing visitors digging deep into their pockets. I'm sure I wasn't alone in promising my eight year old a trip to Toys 'R' Us the next day instead of standing in the unmovable queue.

When it came to sampling the restaurants and cafes we heathened a sigh of relief that we'd opted to bring our own picnic. Queues did trail out of the doors, but as the day was heavily billed as "a chance for us to try out procedures", grumbles about inexperienced staff and equipment failure can be forgiven as teething problems.

However, the most important opinions are surely those of loyal Lego Club members. Eight-year-old Jack, who should own shares in Lego if the thousands of bricks piled up in his bedroom are anything to go by, had this to say: "I thought the models were excellent. They had lots of detail, lights flashed on them and some moved, like the giant spiders legs. My favourite models were in the Technic rock 'n' roll band which were worked by a Lego mechanical system. It must have taken years and years to

build all the models. The shop should be bigger to take all the people. The panning for gold, which cost £1, made my hands cold, but I got a Lego medal for the gold I collected. I loved my driving lesson, but I was sad there weren't any big rides like the ones at Thorpe Park."

It's good to welcome a new theme park to add to the "How do we entertain the kids over this school holiday" list, but Legoland Windsor's failure to provide enough entertainment for the adults and older kids bodes ill for return visits – seen it, done it, what's next?

Starting blocks:
Legoland Windsor (0990 626375) opens to the public at 10am on Friday morning and daily thereafter until the end of September, plus weekends and half-term in October. The park closes at 6pm, with late opening to 8pm in July and August. Adults £15, children aged 4-15 £12, aged 3 or under free. Discounts of £1 if you book in advance on 0990 626364.

Photograph: John Lawrence



SIMON CALDER

What Anne East of London had planned was "The trip of a lifetime for my 83-year-old mother", using a Eurostar train from London to Paris. What she got was a 20,000 Seconds Under the Sea nightmare. Question: was she offered in compensation (a) nothing; (b) a form with which to apply for a voucher that might lead eventually to a replacement ticket; or (c) full recompense for all the money she lost plus four free return tickets to Paris?

The answer is "all three", but (c) was achieved only because of Ms East's persistence and refusal to be palmed off with excuses. Now we all have grumbles about flaws on our travels, and most of the time the best solution is to grin and bear it (and possibly vow to stay at home next time). But sometimes events go so calamitously wrong that anything short of generous redress is a scandal.

So it was in Ms East's case. I shall spare you every detail about her trip from Waterloo to Calais and back; suffice it to say that at precisely the moment she and her mother should have been in Paris, they were only arriving in Ashford. This, as it turned out, was the highlight of the trip. Once the train entered the Channel Tunnel, it developed a fault and all the lights were turned out to conserve energy. After a total of 16 hours, of which six were spent in the tunnel, Ms East and her mother arrived back at Waterloo. It was 2.30am.

We were offered a taxi home, but no one mentioned anything about how Eurostar might make up for this disastrous journey. In the end I asked a customer service representative, and was handed a form to apply for a voucher. Tired and hungry (the last sandwiches having been eaten 15 hours earlier), Ms East was in no mood to argue. But the following day she wrote to European Passenger Services, which runs Eurostar in the UK, asking for more reasonable compensation.

Nothing happened for a week, save for her telling the *Independent* what was going on. Then the telephone rang. It was Eurostar's finance director, apologising for the series of blunders and agreeing to meet Ms East's claim in full. He also threw in a couple of free trips to the French capital. Commendable customer relations eventually, but if Ms East had not made a fuss she might have been left with nothing.

One reason Manchester is officially England's "top tourist town", as we reported last week, is the welcome shown to visitors. The award prompted Chris Walsley of London to write with his own experience of the citizens' generosity.

"I was standing on a busy main road in Manchester in the pouring rain with a suitcase at my feet. A man driving a brown Datsun pulled up, leapt out, grabbed my case and only then explained that he was giving me a lift to wherever I was going."

"Since my mother never advised me against accepting lifts from strangers, I got in and was driven, unsolicited, halfway across Manchester to Victoria station. When the driver asked me where I came from I said 'near Watford' and he replied 'Someone's got to live there'. When I asked him where he came from he said 'Salford Quays'. I kept my mouth shut. I still wonder who he thought I was."

A Northwest Airlines flight from Gatwick to Minneapolis flew into turbulence at Christmas when a party of travellers let the party spirit get the better of them. A group of passengers became rowdy and started throwing food at cabin crew. The flight attendants refused to serve them any more alcohol, so the parents deployed their children to steal liquor from the drinks cart and a bit of a fracas began. Now a Surrey discount agency, Media Travel, has taken up the theme with its brochure of cut-price tickets to North America. The small print warns transatlantic passengers that "All fights (sic) must take place between 8 January and 28 March".

Summer has arrived for many of Britain's theme parks, though snow was still on the ground at Alton Towers in Staffordshire (0990 204060) when it opened for business last Saturday. Instead of unveiling a new thrill ride, this season the main attraction is the new hotel adjacent to the site. The Alton Towers Hotel will remain open all year; the theme park closes on 3 November. Drayton Manor (01827 287799), close by at Tamworth, opens on 30 March.

Blackpool Pleasure Beach, which celebrates its centenary this summer, is offering all rides for 50p each today and tomorrow. This deal includes the Pepsi Max Big One, Europe's highest roller coaster, normally priced at £3.50. Prices revert to normal from next weekend.

On the east coast, the Magical World of Fantasy Island (01754 872030) opens weekends only until 5 May, plus the whole of Easter week. The new attraction is "the world's first indoor hot-air balloon experience", enabling you to float to the top of the glass pyramid that houses the park.

In south-east England, both Chessington World of Adventures (01372 729560) and Thorpe Park (01432 569393) open their gates today, through until the end of October.

The Field Studies Council's field centre at Slapton Ley, south of Totnes in Devon, will offer thrills of a more sublime kind when courses for adults begin on 19 April. The first option, "Birds of South Devon", is already sold out, but other events during the summer at the centre include a Photographic Safari (28 July-2 August, £185) and "Dart to Pym – exploring the South Devon coastline" (23-30 August, £245). Call 01548 580466 for more details.

Air travellers from Devon have a new link with Dublin from 31 March, when Jersey European (01392 360777) begins operating flights between Exeter and the Irish capital. The lowest return fare for the 80-minute hop from Exeter to Dublin is £104 (including tax) if you stay over a Saturday night.

A good beach guide is included in the new North Cornwall holiday brochure, which is available free by calling 01208 261229. It recommends Summerleaze beach in Bude as ideal for families, but warns that Bedruthan Steps, near Padstow, is dangerous: "A place to look at rather than to sunbathe on."

York is the venue for a literary weekend from 26 to 28 April, organised by Ways With Words (01803 867311). Sarah Kennedy, Jane Gardam and A.S. Byatt are among the speakers at the Dean Court Hotel (where the event is based) and St William's College. The price per person is £195, based on two sharing.

The "Learn at Leisure" programme of the University of Nottingham includes a weekend in Dorchester investigating Thomas Hardy and Tess (24-27 May). Call 0115-951 6526 for details.

Last week Cheshire County Council won the England for Excellence "Tourism for All" award for doing most to help less able travellers. The council has just published a *Welcome Guide* to the county for visitors with disabilities. Regular, large print and tape versions are available free from Cheshire Tourism and Marketing, Goldsmith House, Hamilton Place, Chester CH1 1SE.

English Heritage begins its programme of events aimed at "Bringing History Alive" at Easter, with 15th-century music at Helmsley Castle in North Yorkshire and falconry at Battle Abbey in East Sussex. Special Events Line: 0171-973 3396.

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country

'If you have to call reconstructing sheep shelters art, well, that's all right by me'

The sculptor Andy Goldsworthy is turning part of Cumbria into a sculpture park. By Rosie Millard

The sculptor Andy Goldsworthy is celebrating the Millennium by reconstructing a hundred stone sheep shelters in Cumbria. He is best known for the transience of his work (arches of ice carved at the North Pole; a curtain made from hand-joined twigs and leaves of sycamore) but this project, he hopes, will last at least another millennium. "Ephemeral work is my core nourishment," he agrees. "But it's about the past. A moment that's gone. Sheepfolds are about the future; it's something launching us into what's to come."

Indeed, the recent past of the Cumbrian sheepfold is a pitiful one. Once an essential part of hill-farming, these small walled constructions appeared on fells and local villages in their hundreds. There were three distinct varieties: sheepfolds were for keeping the sheep together; wash-folds were for annual washing prior to clipping; and pinfields, built in villages, were holding-pens for stray or stolen sheep.

Yet modern sheep-farming, all wire fences and chemical baths, meant farmers stopped the labour-intensive practice of going on to the fell to tend their sheep. So the little stone folds, used for thousands of years to wash, shelter and number their woolly inhabitants, have been abandoned and left to decay.

Goldsworthy's project hopes to redress this. An initiative by Cumbria County Council, Northern Arts and the Lottery, Sheepfolds is a £620,000 project to bring back some of the folds in the hills, albeit for aesthetic rather than agrarian reasons. "I'm working where the existing folds used to be," says Goldsworthy, who is rebuilding all three separate types with the expert help of local dry-stone wallers. "I'm rebuilding folds which lay on the fell, or by drove-paths, by rivers, and in the centres of villages. I'm repairing folds with the stones left lying around, or where I have to start from scratch, I'm bringing in local stone."

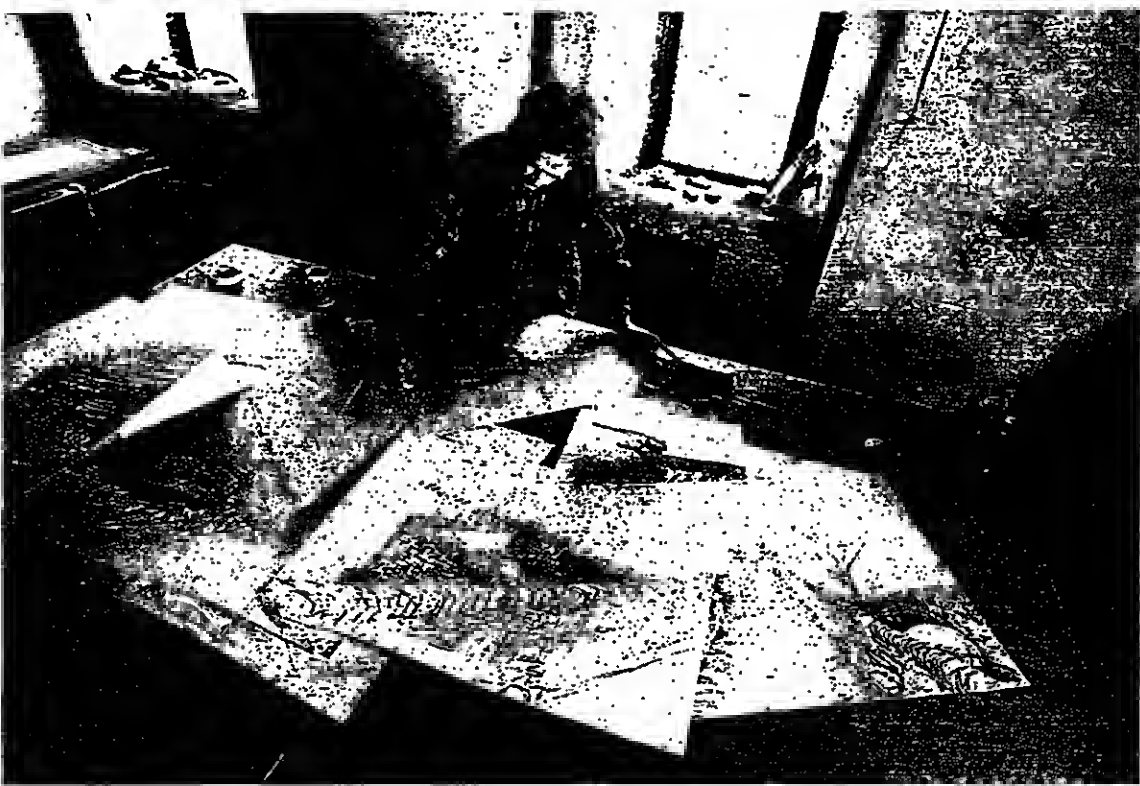
In each he is placing an abstract piece of sculpture: a monumental stone, perhaps, or a cone made from carefully placed layers of stones. "Each fold will contain a work which will be discovered by people when they look inside. Many people won't even know it's there. I could have easily put in something which poked out and dominated everything, but I wanted it to be subtle, and quiet."

Indeed, the entire procedure, whilst not exactly stealthy, has been organised in an extremely low-key manner. "We sought a general blessing and it was on that basis that we proceeded," says Cumbria's public art consultant Steve Chettle. The hill farmers who own the land were individually canvassed. "On the fells, in their kitchens, in their barns. We went and found them all. In the rain, in the snow. Public art in any landscape, not least the landscape of Cumbria, is a sensitive issue," says Chettle, understandably wary of wrecking the spectacular landscape of the Lakes. "We had to take in the particular qualities of Cumbria."

The idea seems to have worked. "I'm not against old walls put back up again, by any manner of means," says hill farmer Bob Cuddy, whose thousand Herdwicks are just about to start lambing in Borrowdale Valley. "If you have to call it art, well, that's all right by me. I'm all in favour of old folds and washes. It's a grand thing. The artist, well, he's doing his thing and



Above: each recovered sheepfold hides a work of art
Below: the sculptor Andy Goldsworthy, in his studio



Photographs: Craig Easton

he's giving our local lads a bit of work. It's better than other arty stuff that's here," continues Cuddy, shuddering at the memory. "We've a Thing, and I'll call it a Thing, imported into our dale from God knows where - the centenary of the National Trust. It's as much in keeping with the Lake District as a low-flying jet."

Not everyone is so positive. "He's had a lot of publicity," says Bampton hill farmer Peter Allen. "But I just wish it drew attention to the difficulties of working on the land as well as to his art. And why can't he just do one, not a hundred? Have you got 100 Rodin sculptures in the country?"

Well no, but some think the number and presence of Sheepfolds will draw attention to the problems and peculiarities of Lakeland hill farming. "Rural landscape is geriatric," says Andrew Humphries of Newton Rigg in Mungrisdale, site for the first two finished Goldsworthy folds. "We just patch it up and repair it. This gives us a chance to make new marks in the landscape, which both echo what went before, and give it a newly sustainable element."

According to Humphries, the project will usher in eco-friendly tourism to the tourist-blighted Lake District. All the folds are being built on, or near public rights of way and the public will be encouraged to visit them via a series of postcards helpfully marked with Ordnance Survey Grid reference numbers.

"People who visit the Lake District will now have a chance to explore and understand what they have come to see. The culture and people of the hill farmers," says Humphries. "It's difficult to see it in a vacuum, but if they can see something like the restored folds, it'll seem to matter. The Cumbrian sheepfolds are the only surviv-

ing examples of community farming in England. They were built on common land. If people get excited about the flora and fauna of Cumbria, they'll look after the orchards here; but these folds and washes are our last vestiges of common land use. They've survived for over a thousand years and until now, no one's looked after them. This will help people value them."

Indeed, there's even a suggestion that with Goldsworthy's sheepfolds,

tourists might learn to empathise not only with the farmers but with the sheep themselves. Dry-stone waller Joe Smith is working with Goldsworthy on the project. "To me, a wall, or a fold, is a functional thing. But one day we were in one of Andy's Mungrisdale folds, tidying up a few things. We sat down to have our sandwiches," says Smith. "And do you know, some Swaledale sheep came in. They weren't sent in, or herded in. They just came in. Just like

that. They were interested. They wandered in, and wandered out again. And do you know," continues Smith, "I can envisage people doing the same thing. Wandering in, scratching their heads and wandering out again. Brilliant."

More information about Sheepfolds is available from Steve Chettle, Cumbria Public Art, The Old Stables, Redhills, Penrith, Cumbria CA11 0DT.

COUNTRY PURSUITS



Steve Ralphs, Bowyer, Norfolk

For me the best part of the working week is when I walk into my garden and fire an arrow from one of my longbows that is nearing completion. A really good specimen will land an arrow in the clump of trees 45 yards away.

If the bow is made from yew this will be a rather fraught experience. We bowyers refer to failures - we never have breaks. It is often said that yew will fail at the first firing or last a lifetime.

From a dull piece of wood a good bowyer can produce a relatively good bow. But it is possible to produce a bad bow from an excellent piece of wood. The skill of the bowyer is to find the best timber and then produce the best possible bow from it. If it was a case of finding yew all the time I think I'd be a nervous wreck by now. A good English yew bow will take me over a week to make, and the timber it is made from will have had to be seasoned for at least five years. Even then there is more chance that it will fail at the first attempt than with a cheaper, laminated bow.

I prefer to use wood from the bole - the trunk - because that is the best way of producing staves of the right length and with the correct sap/heartwood proportions to ensure the bow is both strong and springy. If the bole is not clean of branches the timber is likely to contain pin holes, knots, sap rot, heart shake, cracks and splits. A piece of English yew that looks promising on the outside ends up as a pile of rubbish once I have cut into it and cleft some of the timber.

When I hear that a local yew tree is to be felled I rush out to see it. My mouth waters if it is dead straight like a telegraph pole; but I know from bitter experience that basically all English yew is a lottery. The best yew comes from the USA and Canada, where it grows at a higher altitude, which seems to make all the difference to quality.

I prefer to use a laminated bow, as they are more reliable. My laminated bows are made from a mixture of South American boxwood and hickory, for large archery specialists in this country, Germany, Holland and Sweden, as well as for the film industry.

Most days I can be found in my workshop at home. I try to vary the day as I find it hard to perform one function all day. However on Fridays I like to see the basic staves of the next week's batch and to do most of the gluing of the two parts that make up the basic bow.

The least pleasant task is making the horn nocks - the traditional hook arrangement at the ends of the bow to which the string is attached. Grinding up animal horn, which I buy in from abattoirs, is a nasty, smelly business.

Finishing is also rather laborious - I use a great deal of steel wool and fine abrasive paper before either French polishing or varnishing. The result is hopefully a commendable piece of craftsmanship.

If I were to go for the highest performance bow I could find I would choose an Olympic standard carbon fibre model designed by computer and made in the USA or Japan. But using a bow like that is shooting, not archery.

Steve Ralphs was talking to Clive Fewins

A little local trouble

The sheep farmers of Wales, according to this week's *Country Life*, are far from happy about their English counterparts intruding into the Principality. It's not their braying accents and city ways. It's not even their coarse Anglo-Saxon manners. No, what really gets them is that the English have begun to call themselves "flockmasters" rather than shepherds. "Flockmaster?", one of Mid Glamorgan's home-grown farmers is quoted as saying. "It sounds like something out of *Star Wars*."

Hail to Thee, blithe Spirit! Bird thou never wert... So begins Shelley's "To a Skylark". Sadly, were the poet writing in 1996 he might have continued: "Nor never more shall be." Apparently, Britain's Skylark population has gone into freefall over the past 20 years, dropping at a rate of 335 birds a day, something the RSPB this week set up a campaign to stop. The main culprits seem to be pesticides, which have destroyed the caterpillars and other bugs that skylark chicks need. Herbicides have cut down the amount of seeds from weeds that the adult birds need. Even fields that have been "set aside", as part of crop rotation

schemes, tend to be sprayed before the young birds can fledge. "If set-aside land could be left alone during May and June, the skylarks could bring off two broods a year," Chris Mead of the British Trust for Ornithology said. "But the present system has been set up to increase agriculture production rather than help the birds." He was keen to add, however, that "it is not the fault of the farmers - they are under economic pressure." Adieu to thee...

Finally, despite all the column inches devoted to this week's Mad Human Disease revelations, one question remains: if the Government does decide to have the nation's entire cattle herd put down, what will happen to Britain's most famous bovine, Ellie May, from *The Archers*? Ellie's life has not exactly been a bed of roses recently. Only the other month listeners heard how terribly lonely she had become, stuck in field on her own. But surely they can't let her go to the knacker's yard in Borechester "Let's just say," says Vanessa Whitburn, the programme's editor, "we are looking at the whole BSE situation on a daily basis."

The madness of March hares

Any day now, with luck, you may see mad March hares performing their rituals in the middle of a field. When the mating urge comes over them, they caper and cavort as if the ground were red hot, and sometimes they sit upright to box with their forefeet. Oddly enough, the ones that go in for such fisticuffs are not aggressive males, fancying themselves miniature Tysons, but females giving over-enthusiastic suitors the brush-off.

Nowhere in England is there a better chance of seeing hares than on the Game Conservancy Council's experimental farm at Loddington in Leicestershire. At a time when many surveys are reporting a decline in hare numbers, the population at Loddington has grown at an astonishing rate.

When the Game Conservancy took over in 1991, a count revealed only seven hares on 600-odd acres. With the introduction of efficient predator control, and a greater diversity of farm crops,

numbers built up rapidly to nearly 100 in 1994 - a total which Game Conservancy scientists, considered remarkable. Imagine their astonishment when a census in 1995 showed 195 hares present. There is no doubt about the causes of this spectacular revival. One is the fact that in spring and early summer the resident gamekeeper, Malcolm Brockless, clears his ground of predators. Whereas on other estates most leverets are killed by foxes and stoats, the absence of natural enemies at Loddington enables a high proportion to survive.

The second favourable factor is the agricultural regime. Experiment has shown that hares prefer to feed on, and live in, vegetation no more than eight or 10 inches tall. On most arable farms, with large fields of wheat or barley, the crops soon grow above that height, leaving them with nothing to eat.

At Loddington the farming is planned so that a greater range of crops and cover is



DUFF HART-DAVIS

available all year round. Some corn is sown in winter, some in the spring, as well as linseed and beans: there are also numerous set-aside strips, planted with mixtures of grass, rape, and kale. The result is a patchwork, as agreeable to the human eye as it is to hares and game-birds. Game Conservancy researchers readily admit that the tremendous resurgence has taken them by surprise. They do not yet know what level of population the farm will safely sustain, and they fear that with so many hares on the ground there may be an outbreak of disease such as coccidiosis, a virulent form

of diarrhoea, or pseudotuberculosis, a bacterial infection which can quickly kill mature animals in spring. As a precaution, last year they shot 45 hares and sent 18 alive to the Ministry of Defence gunnery ranges at Castlemartin, in Pembrokeshire, where the Commandant, Lt Col Michael Portman, is making a bold attempt to re-colonise 6,000 acres of grassland.

A keen beagler, Colonel Portman saw from old records that hares once flourished in Pembrokeshire: the game-books of the Cawdor Estate, which used to own some of the land, show that in the 1880s it was not unusual to shoot 800 a year. When he arrived at Castlemartin in 1991 there was not a single hare to be seen, but the ranges were full of other wild life, including buzzards, barn owls and choughs (similar to jackdaws).

Being untouched by chemicals, and rarely visited by humans, the grassland seemed ideal for hares. Colonel Port-

man therefore set about importing some, not only from Loddington, but also from other areas. A batch from the ammunition depot at Kineton, in Warwickshire, arrived "with WD arrows on their bottoms". Meanwhile, he has done all he can to make the environment more attractive, putting in root crops, planting new woodland and calling local foxes.

It is too early to say whether his enterprise will succeed. One snag is that in winter the ranges are grazed down to the texture of a golf course by sheep brought off the Prescell mountains, so that food and cover diminish. Meanwhile, at Loddington, the Game Conservancy's neighbours have accused them of luring all the hares in Leicestershire on to their land. The opposite is manifestly true: that surplus animals are moving out into neighbouring territories - a fact which will no doubt be confirmed when radio-tracking experiments start this autumn.

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What's really a fast

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When you're buying Mercedes, reach

By James Ruppert

Same car, different label

A Mazda is really a Fiesta, a Proton is a Mitsubishi. What's happened to brand values? By Gavin Green

The other day I discovered that my favourite designer tie is now available in a well-known high street store, wearing that well-known high street store's label. I'll now probably run into endless other guys wearing exactly the same piece of silk around their necks. Well, things could be worse, I thought. When I was told that their ties will have cost them half what I paid, I confess to being more peeved than surprised. We all know that designer labels have higher mark-ups than high street store's own-brands. The greater exclusivity and "brand value" kids us into believing that such extravagance is worthwhile. Nonetheless there still seems to me something dishonest about two goods with different labels actually being one and the same. My BMW of ties is now re-badged as a Ford.

There are a few marketing tricks unknown to the car industry, of course. Any business so adept at turning tin boxes into sex symbols (as the motor industry has done over the years and is now doing with renewed vigour in its advertising), cannot be regarded as anything other than shrewd. No surprise then that, when it comes to the tie-type trick, the car industry has been there before.

We British have been particularly exposed to it. BL's many different cars in the Sixties were invariably just a small pool of models wearing different disguises. Rileys were just Morris which were just Austins. Just as, until recently, Rovers were just Hondas with more wood inside and a smarter grille.

But the same car/different label trick is now reaching almost epidemic proportions. And, just as with me and my tie, I suspect that the poor punter, who pays great heed to brand values, is being misled.

The most recent example is the new Mazda 121. The old 121 was an oddball little thing, made in Japan. Not many were sold in Britain but those who took the plunge, I'm told, were mostly very pleased. They no doubt valued the 121's made-in-Japan bonesty and reliability, and its ease of operation. Mazda ownership promises (and usually delivers) a hassle-free relationship between company and customer.

No doubt those 121 owners, when it comes to the trade in, will first think of the new 121. They'll visit their Mazda dealer and be assured of the many virtues of the new model (not disingenuously either, for it's a good car). They'll probably sign on the bottom line. I wonder how many Mazda salesmen will voluntarily admit that, in fact, they're buying a Ford? Designed by Ford,

developed by Ford, and built by Ford (in Dagenham). The new 121, you see, is nothing more or less than a Ford Fiesta with different badges and minor changes. It's a clever move, by Mazda, to circumvent import restrictions on Japanese-made cars: being made in Britain, the new 121 is outside the quota. Ford, too, benefits: in effect, it's now making more Fiestas.

Ford is rather good at playing the this game. Its Ford Maverick 4x4 is a re-badged Nissan Terrano. The Ford Probe is a Mazda MX-6 coupe. The Ford Galaxy Multi-Purpose Vehicle (MPV) is the same as a Volkswagen Sharan, and the upcoming Seat Alhambra. That it is the best MPV is little consolation. At least when you buy a Renault Espace, you know that no non-Espace driver has one.

There are myriad other examples. The latest Rover 400 ("the best long distance ride on earth") is a Honda Civic 5-door. The Citroën Saxo, unveiled with much pomp and ceremony at the recent Geneva Show, is just a Peugeot 106 in drag. The Vauxhall Monterey 4x4 is an old Isuzu Trooper (not that it matters too much: nobody buys either). The new Citroën Synergie MPV is the same as a Peugeot 806 or a Fiat Ulysse. The heavily promoted new Daewoo, whose catchy ads are helping rack up impressive sales, are merely old Vauxhalls. Malaysian Protons are just old Mitsubishis.

Does any of this matter? Does the punter really care, as long as he gets a decent, reliable car? On the face of it, yes it does.

If you buy a Galaxy MPV, you've probably made a conscious decision to buy a Ford. Then you find out that your neighbour has just bought a Volkswagen Sharan and you're dismissive ("dour, stodgy Volkswagens. Look at the Beetle: what a joke! And besides they're German").

Then somebody tells you it's the same car. The only difference is that a little man in Portugal, where they're made, puts VW badges on some and Ford badges on the others. If all this doesn't matter, then brand values – a Holy Grail of marketing, a basic tenet of our capitalistic system – must be complete and utter baloney.

On second thoughts, brand values are often complete and utter baloney, determined either by history (which Henry Ford admitted was bunk) or by clever advertising. They often do not reflect the quality of the product. A Ford is just a car, just as a VW is a car, and just as a Daewoo is an old car.

Oh well, at least I know where to go shopping for ties next time.



Spot the difference: the new Mazda 121 (top) is nothing more and nothing less than a Ford Fiesta (above) with another badge and a few minor changes

road test

Jeep Grand Cherokee



I and Rover should worry. Britain's 4x4 maker thought it had broken free from the pack of Japanese off-roaders, by pitching its new Range Rover further up-market than any off-roader had ever ventured. Then, along comes the Jeep Grand Cherokee from the USA. No funny Japanese name, no bull-bars, just a smart new car from the only off-roader maker that can compete with Land Rover.

Jeep's existing Cherokee has already proved a big hit with those who would otherwise look to a Land Rover Discovery or something Japanese. The Grand is a bigger, smoother, more modern and more expensive version of the Cherokee idea, but at £28,995 it's still more than £4,000 cheaper than the cheapest Range Rover. It is not quite as new as it seems, having been launched in 1992, but is only now available with right-hand drive.

Automatic transmission comes as standard (the forthcoming turbodiesel version will be a manual), and for the most part you just select Drive and let the Jeep get on with it. I'd prefer it if the transmission didn't change up so soon during normal driving – the engine feels as though it is labouring – but the upshot is that engine noise seldom intrudes.

A viscous coupling in the transmission means that the Grand Cherokee behaves as a rear-wheel-drive car most of the time, with power being diverted to the front wheels automatically as the rears lose their grip. It makes for easy, fail-safe handling, backed up by an absorbent ride over bumps, and smooth (if imprecise) steering.

Why favour a Grand Cherokee over a Range Rover? The Jeep gives a similar blend of attributes, and rather more stylish looks, for less money. There's also the possible kudos of knowing that European-market Grands are built at the Steyr-Daimler-Puch factory in Austria, alongside the indestructible Mercedes-Benz G-wagen.

So what's the snag? Plastic wood on the dashboard, exposed for its true self by having "Jeep" and "SRS" (indicating an airbag) moulded into it. Like I said, it's cheaper than a Range Rover. But well worth the saving, plastic wood or not.

John Simister

Specifications

Jeep Grand Cherokee 4.0 Limited, £28,995. Engine, 3960cc, six cylinders, 174bhp at 4600rpm. Four-speed automatic gearbox, four-wheel drive. Top speed 112mph, 0-60 in 9.9 seconds. Fuel consumption 18-23mpg.

Rivals

Isuzu Trooper 3.2 V6 Citation LWB, £24,799. Land Rover Discovery 3.9 V8 ES, £28,900. Mitsubishi Shogun 3.5 V6 SE 5-door, £36,079. Range Rover 4.0 V8, £33,350. Toyota Landcruiser VX 4.5, £39,549.

When you're buying a second-hand Mercedes, read the service book

By James Ruppert

Image. In the used-car business a good image makes life a lot easier. And in the case of Mercedes, it makes the German car a sensible and safe, if expensive used buy. For a car that in its native land leads a double life as the nation's favourite taxi, you might think that image would be hard to come by. But not a bit of it. All the qualities that are required to keep a Hackney carriage on the road – reliability, comfort and solidity – are standard features on the Mercedes, especially the medium-sized models like the W123 and its successor, the E class. Not opulent like the huge S class, or remotely sporty like the SLs, these models won't ever let you down. With the arrival of the new E class, there has never been a better time to consider one of these classy saloons.

The W123, also referred to as the 200 series, lasted 10 years, staying in production from 1976 to 1986, although used examples are set to be with us well into the next century. Build quality on these cars was nothing short of remarkable. Everything about them is heavy, from the minimum 3000 pound kerb weight to the Fort Knox doors – and, it has to be said, the rock hard seats.

Firmness is part of the Mercedes interior experience. One flick of the precise switchgear proves that the firmest thing on board is the driver. Not surprisingly there is a sixth digit on the mileometer to cope with the inevitable multi thousand mileage. So beware owners who lie about the true mileage, or the car's previous life as a private hire taxi.

When it comes to choosing a model, the 200 is slow, the 230E pleasant and the six-cylinder 280E the best.



Sophisticated middleweight, the W124

Diesels are deservedly popular, but are painfully slow. TE estate models are the most up-market of load luggers and easily eclipse the common Volvo.

The W124, more commonly called the E class, carried on from where it's predecessor left off, as a relaxing, sophisticated and prestigious package. It was a big improvement, with more modern styling, lighter bodies and better performance. The range steadily grew to include more engine options. ABS braking was

prepared to spend money on servicing and parts. Lack of attention is the Mercedes' only enemy and then things will start to go expensively wrong. Always buy an automatic, but don't pick an unwise beige, dull or watery colour scheme which looks awful and can knock hundreds off the resale value. Sunroof and alloy wheels also make selling a Merc on even easier. So if the W123/4 you like looks pristine, drives quietly and has a history then there is nothing to worry about, in theory.

In practice, I stumbled across perhaps the most remarkable testament to the Mercedes marque when I visited a friend and his recently acquired W123. Parked in a field for a year, it had a patchy history and poor prospects. My friend bought it for £250 and would it away. After a minor service, a new battery and a steam clean, it runs and drives like a two-year-old despite the 120,000 miles.

Maybe he was lucky, but there are plenty of similar cars advertised at around £1,500 to £2,000 in quite remarkable condition. The most you will pay is £5,000 for a 1986 TE estate unless the genuine mileage is spectacularly low. The trick is avoiding the ones that have

recently been retired from the mini cab circuit.

Looking for E-class cars that I could believe in, I visited Western Mercedes Benz in Edinburgh. They had a 300E for £11,495 with the ideal specifications of an automatic gearbox and alloy wheels. It was a two-owner example with full service history, and mileage a careful 75,000. Down south, Dick Lovett had another 1983 E class, 230 TE estate. Seven seats, automatic and air conditioning, almost perfect, for a reasonable £12,995. At Brunswick in Croydon £32,995 could get last year's E320 with all mod cons and a tiny 9,000 mileage.

For cost-effective Mercedes shopping you have to consider private sellers or specialists. At Kenton in north London there was a good selection of E-class cars. Their diesel estates started at £10,395 for a 1987 model and rose to £15,995 for a 1990 300E 24-valve with leather and service history. There was even a 1983 280SE at £4,995.

For something more unusual, Stadium Cars in Glasgow had a tarted up, F registered 300E at a mere £9,995. The good news was a full Mercedes service history, but not everyone would appreciate its body kit, even if it is a factory approved AMG add-on. An E class, or in fact any Mercedes, will always look better without any adornment. Right car, nice price, wrong image.

Western Mercedes Benz: 0131-443 6091
Stadium Cars: 0141-647 5878
Dick Lovett: 01793 615000
Brunswick: 0181-760 0210
Kenton: 0181-907 7445

motoring

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money

Investments with Eastern promise

Clifford German looks at some funds with a yen for Japanese markets

It is inevitable that Japan will return to economic growth and Japanese shares will eventually return to favour. It is a basic assumption of most fund managers. While New York and London are close to all-time highs, and the Tokyo market has rallied by about 25 per cent since it bottomed out last summer, Japan is barely 50 per cent of its all-time high, says Ed Mercer, of Atlantis Fund Management, the independently-owned, Guernsey-based managers.

The only question is when, and there have been several false dawns already. But no fewer than three funds are raising money this month. For the first time in years a rebound in investment by Japanese companies is coinciding with a further round of public sector spending on the infrastructure, the current exchange rate has made Japanese companies competitive and profitable at home and abroad, company earnings are set to double over the next two years, and there is scope for increased consumer spending, according to Gartmore Investment Trust Management's managing director, Michael Wrobel.

After keeping a low profile on Japan for five years Gartmore is launching its Select Japanese Investment Trust to parallel its unit trust. It hopes to raise up to £75m at 100p a share with one free warrant for every five shares. The minimum subscription is £1,000 and the initial expenses are capped at 4.5 per cent with an annual charge of 1 per cent.

It will invest in 60 to 70 companies with the initial emphasis on smaller and

medium-sized companies in the domestic manufacturing, electronics and real estate sectors. Mr Wrobel is bullish about demand for personal computers and mobile phones where take-up is well below US levels.

Atlantis is hoping to raise \$150m through an approved investment trust to invest in Japan for long-term capital growth, favouring healthcare, leisure and media sectors and some technology companies. It will avoid banks and utilities. The minimum subscription is £1,500, investors will receive one free warrant for every five shares, the initial charge is likely to be around 4 per cent and the management charge 1.5 per cent a year.

Although Japan funds are not fully eligible as PEP investments, up to £1,500 can be held as part of a £6,000 general PEP. Investors can ask their PEP manager to buy shares for their PEP or can transfer shares they buy in the public offer to their PEP within 42 days of the allotment.

Meanwhile, General Accident Life has launched a guaranteed growth bond to invest in the Tokyo market over the 66 months to November 2001. Investors will receive the growth in the Nikkei 300 index on 95 per cent of their investment and a guaranteed return of 1.25 per cent on the full amount subscribed.

Charges are included in the terms of the offer and the minimum investment is £2,500. There is an early investment bonus for applications received before 31 May.

General Accident Life: 0500 100200
Gartmore: 0800 289336
Atlantis: 0800 449866

Best borrowing rates

Telephone	% Rate and period	Min. adv. %	Fee	Incentive	Redemption penalty
MORTGAGES					
Fixed rates					
Scarlborough BS	0800 550547	0.25 for 1 year	70	0.75%	—
First Mortgage	0800 080088	3.75 to 1/5/98	75	£275	—
Northern Rock BS	0800 591500	7.24 to 1/5/01	95	£295	—
Variable rates					
Hinckley & Rugby	0800 774499	0.11 for 9 mths	70	—	Free val, 3 yrs unemployment ins
Derbyshire BS	01332 841000	3.64 for 2 years	75	£125	Free val, fee refund, £250 re-mortgages
Halifax BS	0800 101110	4.45 to 30/4/99	90	—	Free valuation
Alliance & Leicester	01273 775454	1.65 to 1/4/97	95	0.5%	Refund val. Free ASU
NatWest Home Lns	0800 400999	4.19 to 31/3/98	95	£145	£50 rebate A
Nationwide BS	01793 513513	7.39 for 5 years	95	£295	£50 rebate + val fee
First time buyers variable rates					
Principally BS	01222 344188	1.00 to 1/5/97	90	—	—
Greenwich BS	0181 858 8212	3.75 for 2 years	95	—	—
Abbey National	0800 555100	5.99 to 31/5/01	95	—	Refund valuation fee
PERSONAL LOANS					
Unsecured					
Direct Line	0141 248 9966	14.90%	—	—	—
Midland Bank	0800 180180	14.90	—	—	—
Clydesdale Bank	0800 240024	16.20	—	—	—
Secured (second charge)					
Clydesdale Bank	0800 240024	8.00	Neg	£3K - £15K	6 mths to 25 years
Royal Bank of Scotland	0800 240024	9.00	70%	£2.5K - £100K	3 years - retirement
First Direct	0800 242424	9.50	80%	£3K to neg	Up to 40 years
OVERDRAFTS					
Woolwich BS	0800 400900	Current	—	—	—
Alliance & Leicester	0500 959595	Alliance	0.76	9.5	2.20
Abbey National	0500 200500	Current	0.79	9.9	2.18
CREDIT CARDS					
Standard	—	—	—	—	—
Robert Fleming/S&P	0800 825024	MasterCard/Visa	—	0.92	11.50
Robert Fleming/S&P	0800 825024	MasterCard/Visa	—	1.00	14.00
RBS Advanta	0800 077770	Visa	—	1.22	15.60
Gold cards					
Co-operative Bank	0345 212212	Visa	£20,000	0.50	10.50
Royal Bank of Scotland	01702 362990	Visa	£20,000	1.05N	14.50N
NatWest Bank	0800 200400	Visa	£20,000	1.14	15.90
STORE CARDS					
John Lewis	in store	—	—	—	—
Marks and Spencer	01244 681681	—	—	—	—
Sears	in store	—	—	—	—

APR Annualised percentage rate.

A If company's bookings and orders in mortgage table.

E Available to comprehensive motor insurance policyholders aged over 25 years.

LTV Loan to value

NSI Accident, sickness and unemployment

W Special rate until 30 June 1996

All rates subject to change without notice

MONEYFACTS 01852 500677

21 March 1996

Best savings rates

Telephone number	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate %	Interest interval
INSTANT ACCESS					
Portman BS	01202 292444	Instant Access	Instant	£100	4.80 Year
Shipton BS	01756 700511	High Street	Instant	£2,500	5.10 Year
Shipton BS	01756 700511	High Street	Instant	£15,000	5.25 Year
Shipton BS	01756 700511	High Street	Instant	£30,000	6.00 Year
INSTANT ACCESS - POSTAL					
Yorkshire BS	0800 378836	First Class Access	Postal	£1,000	5.00 Year
Buckinghamshire BS	01494 873064	Children Gold	Postal	£10,000	5.65 6 Months
First National BS	0800 558844	Demand Deposit	Postal	£10,000	5.70 Year
Direct Line	0161 667 1121	Instant Savings	Telephone	£25,000	6.00 Year
INSTANT ACCESS - DIRECT					
Manchester BS	0161 834 9465	45 Day	45day	£25,000	6.55 Year
Bradford & Bingley BS	0345 248248	Direct 90	90 day P	£15,000	6.60 Year
Bradford & Bingley BS	0345 248248	Direct 90	90 day P	£30,000	7.00 Year
Chelsea BS	0800 272505	120 Account	120 day	£5,000	6.50 Year
INSTANT ACCESS - PATRIFINDER					
Co-operative Bank	0345 252000	Patrfinder	Instant	£5,000	5.00 Month
Manchester BS	0161 834 9465	45 Day	45 day	£25,000	6.36 Month
Bradford & Bingley BS	0345 248248	Direct 90	90 day P	£15,000	6.60 Month
Bradford & Bingley BS	0345 248248	Direct 90	90 day P	£30,000	7.00 Month
FIXED RATE BONDS					
Chelsea BS	0800 272505	Fixed Rate Bond	1/6/98	£10,000	6.75F Year
Shrop & Swindon BS	0345 252423	Fixed Rate Bond	2/4/99	£20,000	7.05F Year
Bristol & West BS	0117 979 2222	Fixed for Three	3 Year	£5,000	7.05F Year
Bristol & West BS	0117 979 2222	Fixed for Three	3 Year	£25,000	7.10F Year
CREDIT ACCOUNTS					
Reinwort Benson	01202 502404	HICA	Instant	£2,500	5.25 Month
Alliance & Leicester BS	0115 271 7272	Alliance	Instant	£5,000	5.00 Month
Chelsea BS	0800 272515	Classic Postal	Instant	£10,000	5.00 Year
Robert Fleming/S&P	0800 829024	Higher Rate Deposit	Instant	£10,000	5.50 3 Months
GUARANTEED INVESTMENTS					
AIG	0181 680 7172	1 year	£10,000	4.85FN	Year
AIG	0181 680 7172	2 year	£10,000	5.55FN	Year
Premium Life	0800 414111	3 year	£10,000	5.75FN	Year
Premium Life	0800 414111	4 year	£10,000	6.15FN	Year
Pinnacle Insurance	0181 207 9007	5 year	£3,000	6.75FN	Year
OFFSHORE SAVING					
Northern Rock, Guern	01481 714600	Offshore Instant	Instant	£10,000	6.45 Year
Northern Rock, Guern	01481 714600	Offshore Instant	Instant	£25,000	6.70 Year
Northern Rock, Guern	01481 714600	Offshore Instant	Instant	£50,000	6.90 Year
Cham Midshires, Guern	01481 700580	Fixed Account	31.1.99	£5,000	7.25F Year
NATIONAL SAVINGS					
Investment Account		1 month	£20	5.00	Year
Income Bond		3 month	£20,000	5.50	Year
Capital Bond	Series 1	5 year	£100	6.65 F	Maturity
First Option Bond		12 month	£1,000	6.25 F	Year
Pensioner's Guaranteed Income Bond	Series 3	5 year	£500	7.00 F	Month
NS Certificates (tax-free)		5 year	£100	5.35 F	Maturity
43rd Issue		5 year	£100	2.50 + 1p	Maturity
8th Index linked		5 year	£100	6.75 F	Maturity
Children's Bond	Issue H	5 year	£25	6.75 F	Maturity
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All rates are shown gross and are subject to change without notice.					
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21 March 1996



FEAR OF FINANCE

Clifford German

Short-term interest rates are still edging lower, but longer rates are starting to edge up. Interest rates offered on selected guaranteed income bonds have risen this week, according to brokers Baronworth and annuity rates, which are driven by long-term interest rates, have increased again for the ninth week in a row, according to the Annuity Bureau.

This is welcome news to savers, but it has implications for borrowers. If you have been thinking of taking the plunge and fixing

your mortgage costs for the next five years, it is make your mind up time. In the last fortnight, three of the best five-year fixed rates have been withdrawn, and the cheapest current offer still available, according to brokers John Charcol, is Coventry Building Society's 6.79 per cent plus a 3 per cent fee.

There is no redemption penalty, but whichever way you slice it that works out at well over 7 per cent over the five-year term.

The fact is five-year mortgage money has been looking unusu-

tainably cheap for some time, since the cost of funds for two years and more ahead started anticipating the near certainty of a Labour government in power by then.

But the mortgage war is not going to fizzle out. The battlefront has simply shifted to other fronts. Norwich & Peterborough in fact has almost simultaneously withdrawn its five-year fixed rate of 7.24 per cent and cut its fixed rate to July 1997 from 3.99 per cent to 3.59 per cent.

Alliance & Leicester has come up with a new low one-year fixed rate of 1.65 per cent with a six month penalty for paying back within five years.

Legal & General has returned to the fray by cutting the cost of its two main mortgage products, Guaranteed Gold and Flexible Reserve, from 6.95 per cent to 6.39 per cent.

Both are variable rates, available through financial advisers, through Legal & General's own sales forces and over the phone

from its direct sales department. Flexible Reserve allows borrowers to accelerate repayments at any time, and equally important, to borrow back the additional payments at any time. There are no hidden fees and no penalties for early redemption.

Other short-term borrowing rates are also continuing to fall. The TSB this week has cut its personal loan rates by 2 per cent to 12.9 per cent APR on loans over £7,500 and by 1 per cent to 15.9 per cent on loans over £5,000.

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No interest is payable on a cancelled purchase.

Shortly before each anniversary of purchase we will write and tell you the guaranteed rate for the following 12 months and also the bonus rate (if applicable). You then have the option of leaving your money invested for a further 12 months, in which case you need take no action.

If you prefer, you can cash in your bond. We will pay the tax on your behalf at the lower rate (currently 20%). Higher rate taxpayers will need to pay the additional tax due. If you are a non-taxpayer you can apply to your tax office for a refund. FIRST Option Bonds can be withdrawn from sale without notice. We can only accept your application if the above terms are met and after all the time we receive your application and cheque.

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All forenames _____
Permanent address _____
Postcode _____ Date of birth _____
- I understand the purchase will be subject to the terms of the Prospectus.

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Future options

That don't break the bank. David Porter advises

The turmoil in global stock markets over the past two weeks understandably makes investors think about how to lock in gains without necessarily dumping shares or triggering a liability to capital gains tax.

Until then the London stock market had been within spitting distance of its all-time high. The last interest rate cut should have stabilised London shares for a bit longer. But that was completely overshadowed by plunging markets on Wall Street. London markets followed the US stock market fall causing investors to revise views on where they think shares will head now. A general election is looming – another dampening factor.

Some may conclude that the negatives outweigh the positives – that shares are due for another dive. The hulls have had a good run. Over the past 12 months investors have seen the values of share portfolios soar. Over that time the FT-SE 100 index, comprising shares in Britain's largest companies, has risen almost 20 per cent.

Can investors lock in some profit so that if the bears gain the upper hand they do not lose all of their hard-earned gains? They could sell some shares. That takes nerve as they will lose out if the hulls noises from some quarters turn out to be right. As well as ruling out any further capital gain they would also lose dividend income generated from the shares. Selling shares could also increase an investor's tax burden. Gains up to £6,000 in this tax year are exempt from capital gains tax. But if an investor is already close to breaching that limit before the end of the tax year on 5 April then any sales will probably incur extra tax.

Traded options offer one possible answer to investors' prayers. Tony Hawes, manager of equity products

at the London International Financial Futures and Options Exchange (Liffe) thinks they should feature in most investors' financial planning toolkits. "Buying a 'put' option guarantees a minimum sale price on 68 of the most actively traded shares," he says.

First investors should look to see whether any of their shares feature in the 68 on which options can be bought and sold. To do this they can either ring their stockbroker or examine the statistics pages of the *Financial Times* at the local library. Principally, the 68 are the UK's largest quoted companies and range from supermarket group Asda to pharmaceuticals giant Zeneca.

Traded options are a bit complicated at first glance. That is why Liffe runs training courses up and down the country for investors. But for each of the 68 most traded shares there are two types of contract on offer: a "call option" giving the buyer a right to buy shares at a set price on a fixed future date; or a "put option" giving the buyer a right to sell shares at a specified price on a fixed date in the future.

A contract would cover "put" and "call" options on lots of 1,000 in the 68. Like the shares they shadow the price of a "put" or a "call" change daily.

So now for some recent examples of how "put" options could be put to work. Take Barclays Bank shares, currently trading a little over 720p. They have risen strongly from a low of 550p over the past year. This could prompt some investors to take out a "put" option to guarantee a minimum sale price. Currently buying a put option at 700p (that expires mid-June) would cost 14p for each Barclays share, effectively locking the sale price at 686p (700p less the cost of option, 14p). Locking in a sale price, at 750p would cost 39p a share so the rock bottom price that the investor can

expect per Barclays share is 711p, although don't forget about the other costs involved (see below). In the case of a "put" option the contract becomes worthless if at expiry the exercise price is below that prevailing on the shares in the stock market.

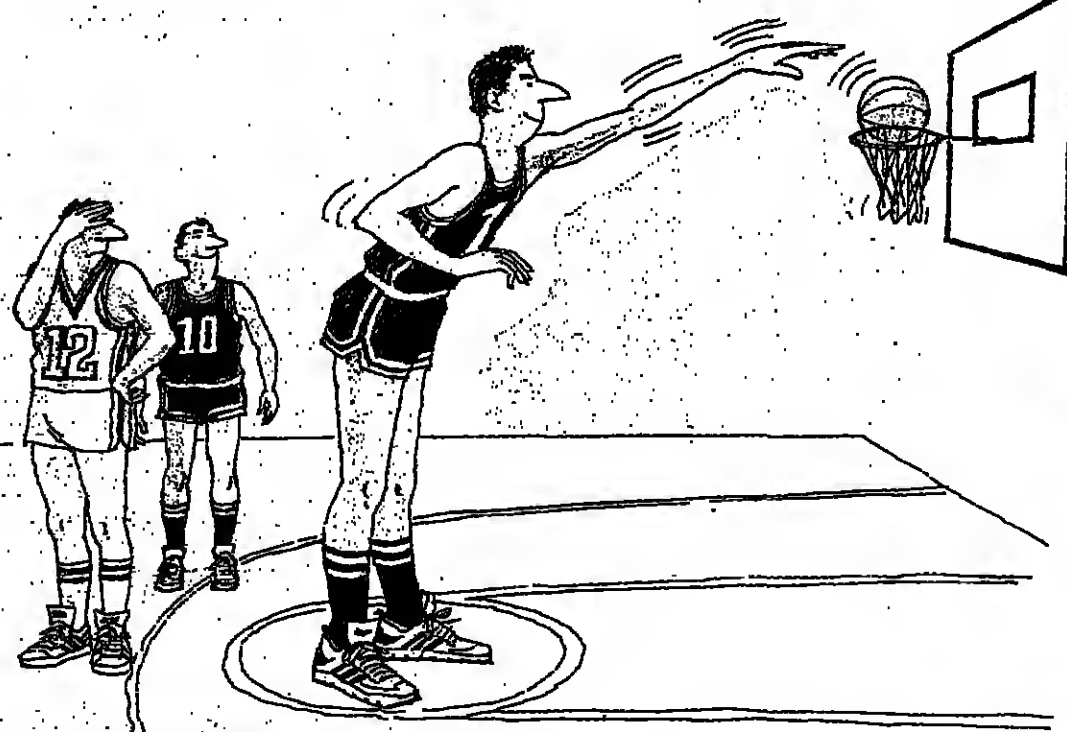
Take another good performing share over the past year – Zeneca. Shares in this drugs giant were changing hands around 1,340p last Thursday. They have risen from a low of 840p in the past year. Locking in at 1,300p would cost 16p per share so the minimum guaranteed price that investors can expect at the end of the term in mid-April is 1,284p per Zeneca share. The cost of a "put" contract over 1,000 shares would be £160 (1,000 shares at the option price 16p) but there would be stockbrokers' commission (probably a minimum £20 to £25). Stockbrokers normally charge a nominal sum of £1 to £2 on top for arranging each option contract.

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Motor insurance myth hits the crash barrier

The demise of the knock-for-knock agreement has not dented insurers' profits as much as they feared. By Nigel Richardson

Much has been said and written over many years about the motor insurers' knock-for-knock agreement, much of it untrue, often by motorists who had little understanding of how it worked or how it applied to them. The one feature always common to any debate on the subject was the insistence by insurers that the agreement worked in the best interests of the majority of motorists in that it helped to keep their premiums low. Even I was persuaded this was the case and have been known to use the argument in its support. It is only now, following the withdrawal of the agreement, that insurers have discovered how untrue this argument had become.

The agreement worked reasonably well in the days of the old tariff companies, a tariff that required members to charge exactly the same premium. The tariff had the effect of producing similar client bases for participating insurers, especially the ratio of comprehensive to non-comprehensive policies. This was crucial for the success of the agreement as it relied on the belief that over a number of claims the insurers' liability aspect would be evened out, very much a case of swings and roundabouts.

Some clients, happy that the claim had been paid, did not argue. To others, however, it was like showing a red rag to a bull. It was not so much the extra premium that annoyed them as the damage to their pride. How dare an insurer imply their driving skills were suspect? Those that did complain were generally told to establish they were not to blame. It was not, after all, in the interest of the insurer to establish liability as by doing so they could lose 10 per cent of the next premium. It is not surprising that motorists took such a dislike to the agreement despite being told it worked in their best interest.

Had the agreement been applied correctly as far as bonus was concerned their clients would never have known of its existence. Those who took the wise decision to insure through a broker generally fared better. Generally unknown to them their broker would have pressed the insurer into allowing the bonus where it was justified in doing so.

The knock-for-knock was simply an agreement between most motor insurance companies and Lloyd's syndicates. If their clients were involved in an accident they would avoid considerable litigation expense and delay in settling by paying their own client's damage claim, if covered by the policy, without seeking any recovery from the negligent party or their insurer.

The maximum permitted bonus under the tariff system was at one stage only 10 per cent (and protected no claims bonuses had not even been thought of) so

one of my key tasks was to broke renewals where there

had been claims. Frequently I was successful in persuading reluctant insurers to allow the no claims bonus where the claim had been dealt with under the agreement. Merely a study of the circumstances of the incident and the nature of damage to the insured vehicle was generally sufficient to determine liability.

The tariff system itself and the knock-for-knock concept collapsed under the impact of competition from new insurers who refused to be party to any trade agreements. This provided them the freedom to target preferred classes of business, the result being that over a number of years insurers built differing profiles of business, in particular the ratio of comprehensive to non-comprehensive clients.

The main weakness of the old knock-for-knock became evident: it had led to comprehensive clients subsidising those who opted for reduced cover, while insurers with mainly comprehensive clients were in turn subsidising those who wrote mainly third party business.

To illustrate the problem take the incident where a motorist insured for third party is negligent in colliding with a motorist insured comprehensively. The third party insurer pays nothing to their client, the comprehensive insurer settles his client's claim and is unable to make a recovery from the negligent driver's insurer because of the agreement. Had the liability been the other way around the comprehensive insurer would have had to pay the cost of the damage to both vehicles. So the comprehensive insurer was always having to pay his own damage and in addition the damage to any third party vehicle where their policyholder was negligent. Meanwhile the third party insurer never paid any accidental damage except maybe under an uninsured loss claim.

Once a predominantly comprehensive insurer had finally taken the bold step of cancelling their knock-for-knock agreements they were often surprised to find that they were actually recovering the majority of the accidental damage payments they were making to their clients without any appreciable cost in doing so. Those insurers who favoured third party risks were obviously not so keen to end an agreement that had been highly profitable for them. They were now having to pay their policyholders' correct share of the overall claims costs.

The result has been a rating change that is now far fairer to the majority of motorists, those that purchase comprehensive cover. Under the agreement third party premiums were only about half of the equivalent comprehensive rate. Today that has risen to around 75 per cent. The change has been achieved as much by comprehensive premiums falling as by any increase in the third party rates.

Any other change? Well yes, surprise surprise, predominantly third party insurers are now looking for a more balanced account by attempting to attract more comprehensive clients and comprehensive insurers are more inclined to consider limited cover policies now that premiums for them have risen.

So are we seeing the beginning of a return to the days of the old tariff where large insurers all write similar portfolios of business? Perhaps that is wishful thinking in a market dominated by a lust for market share rather than any sound or logical underwriting practice. But at least the myth about the agreement acting in the best interest of the motorist has at last been laid to rest.

Nigel Richardson is motor schemes manager at the RAC

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Growth stocks may be potentially the most rewarding, but they also carry a higher risk of failure – and you have to spot the real growth stocks from the shooting stars, companies that fizzle strongly only to burn out quickly

There is no greater competition between investment practitioners than that between those who favour growth shares and those who engage in so-called "value" investing. The former say that the key to making money consistently is buying shares that are experiencing rapid growth in earnings. The latter say that a much better approach is to look for those that are selling at such a low price – relative to earnings, asset value or cash flow – that the only way they can go is up.

These two approaches stand at the twin ends of the investment spectrum. Most investors incline, by choice or by temperament, to one approach or to the other. Both like to call on important figures in the history of investment theory. Value investors, for example, pay allegiance to Ben Graham, an American academic turned investment manager.

Graham was a classical scholar who liked nothing better than reading the small print in balance sheets. He was the first man to turn stock market research into a reputable activity, and in a series of books and monographs laid down a series of guidelines for value-based investing which are still required reading for serious students. His book, *Security Analysis*, remains the standard textbook for professional analysts and fund managers.

Growth stock investors, by contrast, pay homage to a different pantheon of heroes. Perhaps the first to establish a lasting reputation for his methods was another American, T Rowe Price. His name still adorns a number of mutual funds in the United States. In more recent times, and in this country, Jim Slater is one well-known investor who has popularised his own version of growth stock theory.

Given the millions of words that have been expended by proponents of these two schools of investing to prove the superiority of their chosen methods, anyone who tries to summarise the differences in a few lines is liable to be accused of distortion and simplification. The divisions are not perhaps quite as deep as those between Euroscptics and Europhiles, but they are not far behind.

Crudely summarised, however, the kind of shares that get growth stock investors excited are small, fast growing companies whose earnings rise steadily over a period of years. By definition, they tend to have low dividend yields – growth stocks are too busy growing to have much time for dividends – and high price/earnings ratios. Most of their value is represented by future potential, rather than past achievement or current performance. Investors who can find



JONATHAN DAVIS
INVESTMENTS

and jump aboard such a company while it is still on its growth trajectory can often make spectacular returns.

What excites a value investor, by contrast, are shares that, for whatever reason, are selling at what looks like a cheap price, when compared with their own recent performance or that of the rest of the stock market. A good stock for a value investor is one with a high yield and low price/earnings ratio. Best of all is a company that has plenty of assets but which is currently out of favour with the prevailing fashion in the stock market.

Those who have the courage to buy this kind of share at the height of its unpopularity can also make a lot of money. Which strategy is better? The arguments have raged for years. In practice, a lot depends on two things: Firstly, what sort of risks the investor is looking to take. Growth stocks may be potentially the most rewarding, but they also carry a higher risk of failure – and you also have to be able to

spot the real growth stocks from the shooting stars, companies that fizzle strongly, only to burn out equally quickly. Value investors by contrast tend to be much more risk-averse.

Secondly, what is happening to the market and the economy as a whole. The early stages of an upturn in the economic cycle tend to produce a raft of small companies whose products or services are much in demand, and whose earnings are therefore growing fast. The question is whether they can sustain that growth when the cycle turns down, or when the market itself moves from a bear to a bull phase. The best time to find value stocks is when gloom in both the stock market and the economy is all around – as it was in the mid 1970s. Then you can buy blue chip companies on earnings or asset value multiples that are but a fraction of their historical average. In markets like today's, when optimism is high and interest rates have fallen sharply, that is less easy.

A research study in the United States now claims to have new and definitive insights into the timeless debate between value and growth investors. According to the Wall Street weekly magazine, *Barron's*, a fund manager called Jim O'Shaughnessy has gained exclusive access to the vast Standard & Poor's database of stock market performance in the 45 years since 1951. He has used it to test which stock-picking strategies have produced the best results over that period.

The full results will not be published until the summer, but these are some of his conclusions, as reported by *Barron's*. In general, they tend to support the view that value investing is the better bet over the long term, but with some notable exceptions. Bear in mind that the data refers exclusively to Wall Street, though the results in London would almost certainly be little different.

• Popular stocks are a surefire way to lose money. If you had bought those shares with the highest prices relative to cash flow, sales or assets, you would have seriously underperformed the stock market as a whole in subsequent years.

• Buying shares based solely on their price/earnings ratio is also a good way to underperform the market as a whole. Shares that have either unusually high or

unusually low p/e ratios provide no guarantee of exceptional performance: if anything, rather the opposite.

• What does seem to work well is buying the shares that have done best in the previous year. Among big companies, those that were the worst performers in the previous year continue to underperform as a group. In general, says Mr O'Shaughnessy, all the best stock-picking strategies he found were based, in part at least, on finding shares which displayed strong relative strength (ie, they had done better than the market as a whole in the recent past).

• The best results of all seem to come from combining value and growth criteria – for example, picking those shares with above average recent performance whose market value was also low relative to the company's sales. The main drawback: finding companies that meet these criteria is often hard to do.

The other drawback with such historical analyses is that – as it rightly says in the small print of all financial advertisements these days – past performance is no guide to future performance.

What Mr O'Shaughnessy's research does underline, however, is that following fashion is one certain way to secure disappointment.

Abstract nightmares

Michael Peters learned about the art market the hard way. By Corinne Simcock

Michael Peters, OBE, 55, is founder and managing partner of Identica, a "new wave" brand design, corporate identity, innovations and multimedia consultancy with clients including Unilever, NatWest, United Disasters, Mercury One-2-One, Finnair and Neslé.

After graduating from Yale with a Master of Fine Arts degree in 1964, he went on to set up Michael Peters and Partners, which became the largest design firm in the world and was floated in 1983. But he yearned for a smaller business again and in 1992 he formed Identica, which has since achieved a fee income of more than £5m and employs 35 people.

Years ago, when I was at art school in America, I studied under a very famous painter called Joseph Albers. He was an émigré from the Bauhaus, the most influential institute of architecture and design in Germany. This man had a very great influence on me.

It was Albers who introduced me to the Italian painter Matta, and I became a great lover of his work too.

I always wanted to own some of their paintings, but as a student, of course, it was completely out of my reach. It wasn't until the Eighties that I was able to fulfil that particular ambition and acquire works of art by both of them.

By then, like many designers, I had become an avid collector. Over the years I had invested mainly in the work of British painters and craftsmen. It is a passion of mine to spot young artists and designers and give them some support.

But when an abstract by Matta became available at auction, I simply couldn't resist it. He wasn't much in demand at the time as he was known to very few people, and I managed to buy it for £10,000.

I felt such a sense of achievement, owning something I had always admired as a

youngster. To have a Matta in my hands felt like one of the greatest gifts in the world. It was like having a new baby. This painting made marvellous use of colour and form, and every day I looked at it I saw something different.

My golden rule has always been never to sell anything, because my collection is very important to me. Just as everybody knows what they were doing when Kennedy was shot, my collection represents to me the chronology of my life.

But the painting was about 7ft by 6ft, and it is fair to say that it took up rather a large amount of the wall. To do it justice required a lot of available space, and when I moved offices a year later there really was no place for it, so I decided with great regret that I should sell it.

To my surprise, when I auctioned it in 1989, it sold for £16,000. I was amazed, because I don't buy art to sell for the profit. However, it had turned out to be a terrific investment and I was extremely happy.

At least, I was happy until 1992 when a catalogue arrived through my door for a big art auction in New York. There, in colour, was my Matta painting with a reserve price of \$200,000.

My first thought was "Shit". I was astonished, absolutely astonished.

I couldn't believe my own eyes, so in order to be certain I compared it with colour photographs which I take of all additions to my collection. Sure enough, it was the same painting.

Subsequently learned that the picture had sold for \$285,000. By this time I was gobsmacked. It was hard to swallow that a painting could sell for that price when only three years earlier I had sold it for £16,000.

As you can imagine, I was mightily peeved. It was a very great error on my part. If only I had stuck to my guns and not sold something which formed part of my collection.



Art masterclass: A Matta painting like this, sold for £16,000 in 1989, was worth \$285,000 by 1992

But where I really went wrong was in not being savvy to the market. Having decided to sell, I should have done some research, because – like fashion – painters go in and out of vogue.

Had I checked it out I would have discovered that in the early Nineties, Matta had become a big discovery. After all, by that time he was dead.

Apart from feeling sick and fed up, it taught me a very great lesson. If you want to make the maximum return on your investment, make sure you research the market properly.

It's easy to spot trends if you watch what the big collectors are doing, but I just hadn't bothered to check it out. It was a mistake I hope I will never make again, and I have continued to invest in the arts ever since.

The first rule is to buy something that will sit happily on your wall. Personally I couldn't live with having something that was not to my taste simply because it was an investment.

Don't be put off by what others say about

it, and be committed to sponsoring the artist. If you can afford it, by having more than one painting.

On the whole I'm a hoarder, and I hope that one day my children will have a very nice collection to hang on their walls.

But buying a fine art collection is a very exciting hobby that can be translated – if you so desire – into a terrific return on your capital.

It is a great pleasure to own a beautiful painting which day by day is increasing in value, providing you don't mind the emotional upset of getting rid of a piece you like to turn it into money.

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money

Can pay, will pay, but on the right valuation, please

Council tax bills are due to rise next month, but will still be based on 1991 valuations, often well above current prices. Paul Gosling reports

Hundreds of thousands of households in London and the South-east will be paying too much — because the Government refuses to carry out a revaluation of homes. Council tax liability is based on April 1991 values — and since then house prices have fallen more dramatically in the South-east than in the North.

Not only would many properties now be in a lower band if the valuations were done again, but local authorities in the South-east would receive more government grant, reducing the overall funding burden on householders. While the Labour Party has criticised the current system, it too refuses to pledge itself to undertaking a revaluation or say what alternative to the council tax it would put in place in government.

Council tax levels will

rise next month by an average of 6 per cent in England. The highest bills will be paid by owners of homes in Liverpool valued at more than £320,000. Their tax bill will be £2,012.92. The largest increase will be in Wellingborough — where the tax is up by 58 per cent, to £499.50 for an average property — although this reflects the previously very low tax. Several authorities in Scotland and Wales are raising taxes by more than 20 per cent, to pay for the replacement of two-tier councils with new unitary authorities.

But council tax bills are distorted by use of 1991 property values. Figures from Halifax Building Society show that while average property prices in London have dropped by 15 per cent over the last five years, the figure is 9 per cent for the North, while in Scotland they have actually risen on average by 8 per cent. Within these large



The Mersey pound: Come next month's rises, Liverpool will be the site of the highest council tax bills

regions there are much larger variations, with prices falling in London's Docklands by 30 per cent, while increasing in Barnes by 40 per cent. Prices also rose quickly during Northern Ireland's ceasefire, but councils there are funded, by the even older rates system, using 1975 prices.

Local authorities admit it is unfair that they have to bill people on the basis of out-of-date figures. Stephen Lord, finance assistant secretary at the Association of District Councils, says: "It is like basing income tax on what you earned five years ago."

The Association of Metropolitan Authorities has asked the Government to carry out a revaluation. "It is completely bonkers that the Government has no plans for a revaluation," argues Martin Pilgrim, finance under-secretary at the AMA.

The Department of the Environment says a revaluation will not be carried out for the foreseeable future. The Labour Party argues that the council tax system is unfair, with insufficient bands to reflect variations in property prices. But a spokesman for Frank Dobson, Labour's environment spokesman, said his party was not committed to an early revaluation of properties if it won the general election.

A revaluation would lead to redistribution of government grant to local authorities, paying more to the South-east and less to the North — and this could well involve a shift of funds away

from Labour-supporting areas. Without a revaluation, the anomalies are likely to grow worse. There were almost a million appeals against property valuations when the council tax was introduced three years ago, and all but 3,000 of these have now been decided.

But new appeals can only be lodged if a property has changed hands within the last six months, or where property values have been affected by what is called "a change in material circumstances" to the extent that a property would be placed in a different council tax band. The fall in the housing market since 1991 is not grounds for appeal.

Properties can be revalued upwards if an extension is built, or downwards if an existing extension is demolished. Adaptations for a person with disabilities could cause a property to be revalued in either direction.

A new road, supermarket, factory, housing estate or sewage works near a home are likely to be successful grounds for an appeal. So too might be a permanent change of flight-path from an airport. Subsidence, particularly caused by mining, is another accepted basis for appeal.

Where properties are upwardly revalued this only comes into effect when the home is next sold. Owners are not required to notify the valuation office of changes which increase a property's value, but if asked for details these must, by law, be provided.

Local valuation officers

have no obligation to consider appeals lodged now where there is a belated recognition of a past error rather than a change of circumstance.

In practice, however, they will do so, backdating them where the application is accepted. This is likely to lead to the local authority issuing a rebate, plus interest on the sum. There is a right of appeal, to a valuation tribunal, against a valuation officer's decision in the event of a change in circumstances, but not where a factor was previously ignored.

In one recent case in Boston, Lincolnshire, local surveyor Thomas Balderstone acted on behalf of a bungalow owner who had overlooked a clause in the deeds of the property which restricted its use to local farm labourers. The valuation officer has now revalued the property at two-thirds of full market value.

While many homeowners use surveyors, estate agents or solicitors to represent them in requesting a revaluation, this is not necessary. Indeed, many surveyors decline to take on the cases. Mike Cowley, a surveyor based in Nuneaton, Warwickshire, said: "My advice is for people to have a go themselves. If we were to charge them a reasonable fee it would not be worth it, as it would not save them any money."

Citizens' Advice Bureaux will assist people to prepare revaluation applications, and addresses of local valuation officers can be found in the telephone directory.

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THE WEEK AHEAD

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

Sunday television and radio

BBC1

7.30 Childrens BBC: Jim Henson's Animal Show. 7.55 Playdays.

8.15 This Multimedea Business (6770182).

8.30 Breakfast with Frost (S) (25908).

9.30 Season of Change (S) (1987829).

10.15 See Hear (S) (20221).

10.45 Help Your Child with Reading (R) (S) (3153989).

11.00 Hidden Empire (R) (S) (2960).

11.30 My Brilliant Career: Lord Spens (R) (S) (8219).

12.00 Countryfile (S) (50250).

12.30 On the Record (79076).

1.30 EastEnders Omnibus (S) (2975237).

2.55 Christopher Columbus: The Discovery (John Glen 1992 US). Embarrassing 500th anniversary salute to the 15th-century explorer, played by the wooden George Corraface. Marion Brandt looks in need of a health farm as Torquemada (21577453).

4.50 Cartoon (5339328).

4.55 The Clothes Show. Celebrates the 50th anniversary of the bikini (S) (2679540).

5.20 Lifetime. Gaby Roslin appeals on behalf of Camp Quality UK (S) (9546182).

5.30 News, Weather (999899).

5.50 Local News (183521).

5.55 Songs of Praise. From Leicester (S) (185665).

6.30 Antiques Roadshow. Windermere (635521).

7.15 Hamish Macbeth. See Preview, p32 (S) (429057).

8.05 Birds of a Feather (R) (S) (517279).

8.35 News, Weather (5076).

8.50 Pat and Margaret. Another chance to see Victoria Wood's funny and touching comedy drama in which Wood and Julie Walters play sisters separated since childhood. Wood, who works in a Lancashire service station, and Walters, now a big soap star in America, are reunited in a Surprise. Surprise-style TV show (R) (638637).

10.15 A Tribute to George Burns. A repeat, which is what you get for living until you're 100 years old. This was the relatively young Burns (well, 95 to be precise) talking to Terry Wogan (R) (S) (925328).

10.55 Heart of the Matter. See Preview, p32 (S) (607618).

11.35 The Sky at Night (S) (865502).

11.45 Get Carter (Mike Hodges 1971 UK). Sadistic, fashionably fragmented gangster movie set in a stunningly photographed Newcastle, neatly scheduled in the wake of *Our Friends in the North*. Michael Caine is nicely impressive as Jack Carter. (250182).

1.35 Weather (8316962). To 1.40am.

REGIONS. Wales: 11.00pm Wales Playhouse. 11.30 Heart of the Matter. 12.10 The Sky at Night. 12.20 Film: Get Carter. 2.10 News, Weather.

BBC2

6.15 Open University. Pure Mathematics (9429163).

6.40 Maths Models (6639989). 7.05 Reconstruction of the Bankside Theatres (5462347). 7.30 Biological Barriers (4055415).

7.55 Venice and Antwerp - the Cities Compared (1590873). 8.20 Health and Disease in Zimbabwe (4385231). 8.45 How We Study Children (6843250).

9.10 Children's BBC. Jackson: The House at Pooh Corner. 9.25 Phantom 2040. 9.50 The All New Popeye Show. 10.05 Hate This House. 10.30 Grange Hill. 10.55 The Ant and Dec Show. 11.20 Short Change. 11.45 Star Trek.

12.35 Police Squad (R) (7705415).

1.00 Singled Out (8204998).

1.20 Holiday Outings. Le Canal du Midi (54906434).

1.30 Around Westminster (85434).

2.00 Colt 45 (Edwin L. Marin 1950 US).

Undervalued western starring Randolph Scott as a salesman touring the Wild West promoting the new rapid-fire Colt 45 (7179540).

3.10 World Figure Skating Championships (5425540).

3.55 Young Musicians 96 (3365796).

4.55 Rugby Special. Highlights of Pilkington Cup semi-finals: Bath v Gloucester, and London Irish v Leicester (S) (9313927).

5.55 Natural World. Manuel Hinge camped out in the Cairngorms for 12 months to capture this portrait of the area's winter wildlife (528347).

6.45 Crutts 96. Pets win prizes (S) (638618).

7.30 Wheeler on America (S) (518502).

8.20 The Money Programme. How single-issue pressure groups are increasingly dictating the environmental agenda to companies (163279).

9.00 Clive Anderson Is Our Man In... Calcutta (S) (788163).

9.40 The Travel Show Essential Guides (77163).

10.00 Empire of the Sun (Steven Spielberg 1987 US). Spielberg never gets to the semi-hallucinatory heart of J.G. Ballard's novel about an English boy interned by the Japanese after the fall of Shanghai. We see the boy, played by Christian Bale, from the outside, rather than experiencing events through his eyes. The fall of Shanghai itself, though, is impressively handled (Then Weather) (S) (54213908).

12.35 Nothing Lasts Forever (Tom Schiller 1984 US). Inventive and quirky feature from *Saturday Night Live* writer Schiller, with Zach Galligan as an artist in the New York of the future. Cameos come from Bill Murray and Dan Aykroyd (S) (8998458).

2.00 The Learning Zone. To 6.00am.

REGIONS. Wales: 1.30pm Wales Lobby. 4.55 Scrum 5. Ni: 1.30pm Now You're Talking.

ITV/London

6.00 GMTV. 6.00 The Sunday Programme. 6.30 News and Sport. 7.00 The Sunday Programme (41344).

8.00 Disney Club. With PJ and Duncan and Australian dance troupe Tap Dogs (S) (36835908).

10.15 Link. 21st anniversary edition of the programme for disabled people (S) (5405106).

10.30 A Meditation (60328).

11.30 Blessed Are They (S) (8476415).

11.55 Chalk Talk (S) (7576521).

12.30 CrossTalk (80989).

1.00 News, Weather (48303434).

1.10 Jonathan Dimbleby (S) (6500873).

2.00 Smokey and the Bandit II (Hal Needham 1980 US). Truck driver Reynolds has to deliver a baby elephant to the Republican Convention in Texas. Only for those too hungover to operate their remote controls (402811).

3.40 The Munsters Today (S) (6697960).

4.10 London Tonight (4591989).

4.20 News, Weather (4515569).

4.30 The Match Live: Coca-Cola Cup Final. Aston Villa v Leeds United. Not the most attractive of fixtures for neutrals, but the big match atmosphere should loosen lips (pay for extra-time/penalties, because Jeremy Beadle will get shunted) (70946415).

7.15 You've Been Framed! (S) (5462981).

8.00 Coronation Street - The Cruise. Curly and Raquel's honeymoon, filmed on board the QE2. See Preview, p32 (S) (5927).

9.00 Band of Gold. Prostitute drama. Rose travels to Manchester to find her adopted daughter (S) (5163).

10.00 News, Weather (677231).

10.15 Cracker. 2/3. Continuing the re-run of 'The Big Cracker'. Fitz is proved right in his fears about Joanne (R) (674811).

11.15 The New Statesman. Alan joins a moral crusade (R) (603163).

11.45 Theatreland. Sheridan Morley reviews London's new plays (602434).

12.15 Steeplechase Blues (Alan Myerson 1973 US). Snug, anti-establishment comedy about a team of misfits (Donald Sutherland, Jane Fonda, Peter Boyle) renovating an old World War II bomber (819583).

2.00 Cue the Music. Scott Richardson in concert (1110670).

3.05 Ngani Marsh: Colour Scheme. George Baker plays Inspector Allyn, investigating the disappearance of a mysterious man from a run-down guest house (5180421).

4.35 Shift (R) (627495).

5.30 News (35090). To 6.00am.

Channel 4

6.25 Trans World Sport (R) (7094705).

7.20 Take 5. With The Magic Roundabout, Bush Tails, Natalie, Nor the Engine and Juggy Bear (S) (5478908).

7.45 The Magic School Bus (81908).

8.15 Hong Kong Phooey (6763892).

8.30 Stunt Dogs (6840163).

8.55 Slicker Mice from Mars (8869298).

9.20 The Secret World of Alex Mack (S) (2083989).

9.50 Earthworm Jim (S) (6066076).

10.15 Saved by the Bell (1363989).

10.40 Wise Up. Junior points of view (S) (4659873).

11.15 NBA Raw (502095).

12.15 Mission Impossible (866705).

1.15 Blood Stupid. Heliboarding in Canada. It had to happen (S) (802347).

1.45 Football Italia. Depending on whether the players control their strike or not (52003786).

4.00 Blue Wilderness. The Great Barrier Reef (908).

4.30 A French Affair Concluding Malcolm Brinkworth's repeat documentary about four families who have relocated to the Dordogne (R) (S) (19347).

5.30 Hollywood (R) (S) (1144).

6.00 Jules Verne's Rocket to the Moon (Don Sharp 1967 UK). Crazy attempt to follow-up the success of *Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines* has very little to do with Jules Verne. But it's a fun PT Bamum, hoping to regain his fortune by sending a man to the moon. Terry-Thomas and Lionel Jeffries are the rogues trying to scupper his plans (82823521).

7.40 Travelogue. Mongolia (S) (266873).

8.00 Encounters: Mad Dogs and Englishmen. See Preview, p32 (5603).

9.00 The Damocles' Raid. Secret History film re-assessing the effectiveness of the legendary bomb raid of 16 May 1943. Did Barnes Wallis's bouncing bombs result merely in drowned livestock rather than crippling German industry? (R) (S) (3705).

10.00 Diamond Skulls (Nick Broomfield 1989 UK). Documentarist Broomfield tries his hand at fiction as well-learned Gabriel Byrne knocks down a young girl in his car, hushes it up, and then becomes obsessed with the idea that wife Amanda Donohoe is having an affair. A few interesting ideas that don't go far (939927).

11.40 One of Us (Uri Barish 1989 US). See The Big Picture, p32 (421502).

1.10 One of Us (Uri Barish 1989 US). See The Big Picture, p32 (421502).

Perceptive study of Arab-Israeli relations has Sharone Alexander as a military policeman with conflicting loyalties when his investigation into the murder of an Arab leads him to his army colleagues (570477). To 3.10am

ITV/Regions

ANGIA

As London except: 12.30pm Anglia News and Business News (60029). 2.00 Countrywide (7311). 2.30 Heartbeat (768). 3.00 World of Wonder (55629). 3.25 Highway to Heaven (55629). 11.15 Film: Ocean. The Return (1987/788). 1.25am Film: Baywatch (1989/551). 2.05am Film: L.A. Law (1987/551). 3.05am Film: Coach (1984/251). 3.35am Film: (1989/551). 4.30am Film: (1989/551). 5.00-5.30am Film: (1989/551).

THE TESTAMENTS

As London except: 12.25pm News. Newsnight (536381). 1.00am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 3.00am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 3.30am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 4.00am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 4.30am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 5.00am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 5.30am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 6.00am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 6.30am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 7.00am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 7.30am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 8.00am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 8.30am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 9.00am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 9.30am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 10.00am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 10.30am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 11.00am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 11.30am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 12.00am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 12.30am News. The Powers That Be (S) (1521). 1.00am News. 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The big picture She's Gotta Have It

Sun 11.40pm C4

Before the era of bombastic blockbusters like *Malcolm X*, Spike Lee's joints started with the clever, small-scale drama, *She's Gotta Have It*. In this sassy, good-looking debut feature, the director plays one of three men (Tommy Redmond Hicks and John Canada Terrell are the other two) enjoying a simultaneous relationship with the broad-minded Tracy Camilla Johns. To save on costs further, Lee had his father, Bill, pen a catchy jazz score and also gave him a cameo role.

Television preview

RECOMMENDED VIEWING THIS WEEKEND
by Gerard Gilbert

Satellite viewers who forked out the extra £9.95 to watch Mike Tyson annihilate Frank Bruno in 410 seconds obviously got a bad deal as things turned out, but not that much worse than those who coughed up £13.99 (the price at Blockbuster Video this week) for a *Coronation Street* video of Raquel and Curly's honeymoon.

The cover of this special 76-minute escapade clearly states "only available on video" - and, in the presumed belief that this was their only chance to share in Raquel and Curly's joy, something in the region of 750,000 Corrie fans have dug deep for the video. I'm not sure how they'll be feeling this weekend when ITV screens - yes - a special 60-minute episode, *Coronation Street - the Cruise* (Sun TV) about Curly and Raquel's honeymoon. Their £13.99 has bought them 16 minutes of exclusive *Coronation Street*. Not as bad as Tyson/Bruno - but not good.

The idea of screening this one-off seems to be to test the water for a fourth weekly *Coronation Street* episode, in an attempt to end BBC1's traditional dominance of early Sunday evening viewing. This times-

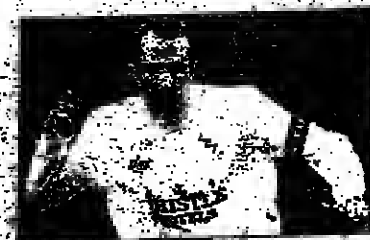
lot was recently shored up for the Beeb by *Batlyskangel* and the returning Hamish Macbeth (Sun BBC1), the Highland copper with the Scottie dog and the constantly clenching jaw muscles, played by wee Robert Carlyle. And Carlyle is a magnificent presence - our own pocket De Niro. In Sunday's episode, there's hanky panky among a sect of religious fundamentalists, bacchanalian Buddhists with a taste for whacky baccy, and the conclusion (temporary, one feels) of last year's romantic cliffhanger.

If - and stranger things have happened - anyone was to make a film out of the 1970s pulp fiction of the late Richard Allen, pseudonymously author of such football terrace classics as *Stimhead*, *Stimhead* and *Bovver Grrr*, and the subject of this week's *Bookmark* (Sat BBC2), then Robert Carlyle would surely be near the front of the casting director's thoughts. Some ageing "skins" in Ian MacMillan's film (touchingly still kitted out in bowler gear late into their thirties) are convinced that the author of such authentic fiction must have been one of them. In fact, he was a fiftysomething Irish-Canadian called Jim Moffat, living blamelessly on the

Dorset coast, where he regularly banged out 10,000 words a day - never editing one of them.

On the subject of sub-cultures, *Heart of the Matter* (Sun BBC1) has a film about Ecstasy (ab)use, and we hear from a whole succession of youngsters, with piddled eyes rolling around their heads like so many joint-winners at the 3.30pm at Doncaster. Is Ecstasy the new religion for the 1990s? Hold on, didn't we go through all this with dope in the late 1960s? Good old Joan Bakewell.

Still, rather synchronised 'ai-chi in a sweaty barn than a dose of rabies. The disease is a rather distant concept this side of Le Shuttle, but worldwide it yearly kills 100,000 people. *Encounters: Mad Dogs and Englishwomen* (Sun C4) follows the efforts of a British vet to prevent a rabies epidemic from sweeping Tanzania's Serengeti Wildlife Park. It looks a horrible way to die (be warned, there's footage of a boy in the throes), with victims contorting their bodies in violent spasms as they try to bite those around them. You'll never look at your pet Labrador in quite the same way again.



The big match Leeds United v Aston Villa

4.30pm ITV Sun

Leeds United and Aston Villa, who contest an even-looking Coca-Cola Cup Final, have both drawn heavily from the ranks of the foreign legion this season. Leeds have profited from the Ghanaian Tony Yeboah and, to a lesser extent, Sweden's Jonas Thelin up front, while the Serb Savo Misic and Dwight Yorke from Wimbledon have become a formidable striking partnership for Villa. Will one of these players tip the balance today, or will the match be won by players from closer to home like Leeds' captain, Gary McAllister (above), or Villa's deadweight defender, Paul McGrath?

Saturday television and radio

BBC1

- 7.25 News: Weather (15.02.95).
- 7.30 Children's BBC: *Imaginarium*, 7.45 The Artbox Bunch, 8.00 Inquid, 8.10 The Finestones, 8.35 The Addams Family.
- 9.00 Live and Kicking: Music from PJ & Duncan and Sheel Seven (09.15.95).
- 12.12 Weather (20.02.95).
- 12.00 Grandstand: 12.20 Football Focus, 12.55 Racing from Newbury, 1.30 Brown Chamberlin Handicap Steeplechase, 1.10 News, 1.15 Skating: the free dance competition in the World Championships at Edmonton, 1.25 Racing from Newbury, 1.30 Lambourn Handicap Hurdle, 1.40 Swimming: the Olympic Trials from Ponds Forge, Sheffield, 1.55 Racing from Newbury: the 2.00 Hecst Panacur EBF Mares' NH Novices Hurdle, 2.10 Rugby League: live coverage of the Challenge Cup semi-final, Leeds v Bradford. Kick-off is at 2.15, 2.55 Swimming, 3.10 Rugby League: second half coverage of Leeds v Bradford, 3.50 Football Half-Times, 4.00 Swimming, 4.40 Final Score, 5.10 Snooker: the draw for the first round of the Embassy World Championship, which begins on 20 April (14.39.96).
- 5.30 News: Weather (30.05.95).
- 5.45 Big Break (S) (45.43.95).
- 6.15 The New Adventures of Superman: A wealthy couple want to add Superman to their rare collections (S) (46.47.95).
- 7.00 Noel's House Party: There's a Go! for Susan George (S) (15.02.95).
- 7.50 The National Lottery Live: Lionel Richie gets the balls rolling (03.32.95).
- 8.05 Daisies and Pansies: The second of Alan Plater's warm and literate adaptations of the Reginald Hill novels, and Prunella Scales should provide enough reason to tune in, as a lecturer at a small university where the principal has been bumped off five years previously (S) (14.45.96).
- 9.35 News and Sport: Weather (Followed by National Lottery Update) (7.52.97).
- 10.00 The Nose at Ten - Best of Comic Relief: Rik Mayall, Rowan Atkinson, Reeves and Mortimer, and French and Saunders from 1991 (S) (9.12.91).
- 10.30 Match of the Day: Arsenal v Newcastle (S) (09.02.95).
- 11.35 They Think It's All Over: From last Tuesday, the guests are Sharon Davies and Bob Mills (R) (8.44.91).
- 12.05 Boxing: Richie Woodhall vs Salvador Yanaz. Woodhall makes a third defence of his European middleweight title (41.26.91).
- 12.55 Money Mania: Richard Fleischer 1987 US. Moronic chase movie in which four treasure hunters try to find the million dollars mentioned by a dying man (55.55.91).
- 2.25 Weather (61.46.91). To 2.30am.
- REGIONS: NI: 4.55pm Northern Ireland Results, 5.40 Newsline.

BBC2

- 6.00 Open University: Education: Making Readers for Life (04.46.95), 6.25 Maths (04.47.95), 6.50 Organic Chemistry (06.11.01), 7.15 A New Role for Men (15.19.95), 7.40 Volcanic Island (40.12.55), 8.05 What Is Music? (52.55.07), 8.30 Crossing the Border (68.88.32), 8.55 Child's Play (68.67.30), 9.20 Education and Society (20.03.97), 9.45 The Chemistry of Life and Death (42.03.68), 10.10 Seeing Through Maths (13.02.87), 10.35 Statistics (08.19.95), 11.00 Global Firms in the Industrialising East (49.95.63), 11.25 An English Accent (68.67.58), 11.50 Modelling in the Motor Industry (84.25.78).
- 12.15 Mud Glorious Mud: The varied wildlife that is found in estuaries (R) (52.28.93).
- 12.40 Gaslight (George Cukor 1944 US). Entertaining adaptation of Patrick Hamilton's pseudo-Victorian thriller with newly-wed Ingrid Bergman being driven mad by husband Charles Boyer. Bergman won an Oscar and the fine cast also includes Joseph Cotten, Dame May Whitty and a teenage Angela Lansbury (65.12.59).
- 2.30 Love Is a Ball (David Swift 1963 US). Charles Boyer again, this time stranded in a trashy, fast-paced comedy set in the French Riviera, where he has been hired to groom a penniless duke into a husband for an American heiress (12.59.04).
- 4.20 Best of Esther: Unusual wedding experiences (R) (S) (48.88.93).
- 4.50 The Oprah Winfrey Show (57.92.75).
- 5.30 TOTP2 (S) (79.69.94).
- 6.15 World Figure Skating Championships. The free dance from Alberta (S) (13.07.93).
- 7.05 News and Sport: Weather (67.43.98).
- 7.20 Correspondent: It's Dealing with Drugs week on the BBC and Edward Stourton visits Poland, apparently the new gateway for drug smuggling into western Europe, and Julie Flint goes to Somalia to report on addition to the powerful stimulant contained in Oat leaves (S) (24.47.91).
- 8.05 Bookmark Profile of cult author Richard Alden. See Preview (Followed by Video Nation Shorts) (S) (38.38.95).
- 9.00 Court TV: More real-life American court cases. This week, the case of 12-year-old Gregory Kingley, who went to the courts in order to "divorce" his biological mother, who was claiming her rights to him over his favoured foster parents (S) (27.17.94).
- 9.50 Anatomy of a Murder (Otto Preminger 1959 US). Superb courtroom drama, considered a masterpiece on release, with a great performance from James Stewart as the lawyer defending a soldier (Ben Gazzara) accused of murdering a bartender who had raped his wife (Followed by Weatherwise) (88.89.63).
- 12.30 Later with Jools Holland. With Sheryl Crow, P J Harvey, Tindershills, D-Influence and technodance artist Moby (R) (S) (96.43.95). To 1.40am.

ITV/London

- 6.00 GMTV 6.00 News: Weather, 6.10 Eat Your Words, 6.40 Barney and Friends, 7.45 Saturday Disney. Steve Coogan, Terry Jones and Eric Idle are in to plug their movie *The Wind in the Willows*, 8.55 Mighty Morphin Power Rangers (42.59.97), 9.25 Teletubbies, Gaby Roslin, SFX veteran Ray Harryhausen and Grand Prix commentator Jonathan Palmer are guests (27.32.93).
- 10.25 Spatz (R) (48.12.96).
- 10.55 It's Not Just Saturday (S) (46.89.04).
- 11.30 The Chart Show (R) (S) (76.43.95).
- 12.30 Whizz Kids: Ultimate Kees (13.30.91).
- 1.00 News: Weather (54.57.16).
- 1.05 Local News: Weather (54.59.43).
- 1.10 Movies: Games and Videos (9.17.00).
- 1.45 Bugs Bunny (9.32.17).
- 2.15 Carry on Nurse (Gerald Thomas 1959 UK). The second in the series and bullying matron Hattie Jacques is about to get a taste of her own medicine (30.04.10).
- 3.45 Alvin (R) (06.32.93).
- 4.45 News: Sport: Weather (42.56.95).
- 5.05 Local News, Sport (1.40.11.01).
- 5.25 Batman (1.42.19.95).
- 5.45 Catchphrase (S) (47.27.81).
- 6.15 The Shame Ritchie Experience. Louise provides the musical link as three more couples bash it out to get married in TV studio (S) (96.78.97).
- 7.05 Barmy. His kind of people (Including Lottery Result) (8.06.94).
- 8.05 Stars in Their Eyes. People pretend to be Fats Domino, Jon Bon Jovi and, yes, Chas and Dave (S) (82.49.1).
- 8.50 News: National Lottery Update: Weather (60.17.8).
- 9.05 The Governor. Return of the Lynda La Plante-scripted and produced drama starring Janet McTeer as the somewhat implausible prison governor. Our heroine has been in the States training as a hostage release negotiator. Guess what happens next (S) (93.30.92).
- 10.05 Down and Out in Beverly Hills (Paul Mazursky 1985 US). Reilly upholding Renoir's 1931 *Boudu Saved from Drowning* to 1980s. Beverly Hills, where new-rich millionaire Richard Dreyfuss saves tramp Nick Nolte from killing himself and introduces him into his household. Bette Midler plays his wife (S) (57.87.43).
- 12.00 Pyjama Party. Katie Puckrick and the girls' guests are Jacqueline Pirie and Lisa Riley from *Emmerdale* (S) (20.28.11).
- 1.25 Fun Business (S) (60.76.43).
- 1.55 Tropical Heat (R) (S) (26.38.92).
- 2.50 God's Gift. Dating game (23.09.89).
- 3.45 It's News Week in Review. Entertainment gossip (74.58.11).
- 4.40 ITV Sport Classics II (11.25.78.73).
- 5.05 Coach (48.56.95).
- 5.30 News (75.23.1). To 6.00am.

Channel 4

- 6.05 Sesame Street (R) (81.32.71).
- 7.05 Uppity (S) (R) (54.07.43).
- 7.30 Super Mario Brothers (80.52.01).
- 7.45 First World (R) (80.57.66).
- 8.00 Trans World Sport (23.58.8).
- 9.00 The Morning Line. Preview of today's top racing. (S) (22.63.3).
- 10.00 The Greatest. The cases for Jackie Stewart and Linford Christie (R) (S) (83.85.5).
- 10.30 NBA Basketball (R) (29.67.9).
- 11.00 Gazette Football Italia (22.67.5).
- 12.00 The Late Late Show (S) (63.10.1).
- 12.30 The Great Marmite (7.74.1.58).
- 12.55 Night Train to Munich (Carol Reed 1940 UK). Laurence and Gillian more or less recycled their script for Hitchcock's *The Lady Vanishes* for this entertaining propaganda thriller about a Czech scientist and his daughter being ushered out of Nazi Germany by undercover spy Rex Harrison (41.30.56).
- 2.40 Channel 4 Racing from Doncaster The 3.00 Global Shoppers' Stakes, 3.40 William Hill Lincoln Handicap, 4.15 Midland Copying Doncaster Shield Stakes, and 4.45 Cambridge Trophy (61.16.92.01.4).
- 5.05 Brookside Omnibus (S) (47.14.56).
- 6.30 Right to Reply (S) (14.0).
- 7.00 A Kick in the Pants (S) (87.62).
- 8.00 Hidden Kingdoms. The common loon (also known to its friends as the great northern diver) followed through the course of one year in North America, as they face threats from pollution, tourism, fishing, racoons and turtles (S) (74.10).
- 9.00 Auf Wiedersehen Pet. Hazel is becoming more than a handful for Barry (49.46).
- 10.00 The World of Lee Evans. Samantha Beckinsale guests as the girl-next-door whose has stolen the ju-ga-nerd one's affections (R) (S) (22.58.30).
- 10.35 The Blue Light Zone: Tribal Cops. The Native American Police who patrol the vast Laguna, Navajo and Hopi reservations of New Mexico (S) (24.14.9).
- 11.10 NYPD Blue. An episode from the second series with Detective Andy Sipowicz tracking down the killer of an abused wife (R) (S) (73.55.88).
- 12.05 Prince of the City (Sidney Lumet 1981 US). Over three hours is a long time to be stuck in the Stygian gloom of Lumet's hyper-realistic New York police department, where Treat Williams' narcotics cop has agreed to be wired up and so inform on his corrupt colleagues. Rambling, and with an OTT performance by Williams, who is acted off the screen by the economical Jerry Orbach (50.03.44).
- 3.10 White Homeland Commando. Drama looking at the rise of a right wing white supremacist group. Stars William Daloe (R) (S) (71.12.74).
- 4.20 The Giltie Show. Last night's show (R) (S) (62.30.95). To 5.10am.

ITV/Regions

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